tic or racial differential. It might be well to P
define how certain other terms are used. 121

**Camp:** This term distinguishes the settlement 128
of the Mbuti from that of the villagers. There 104
may be hunting camps, those situated in the 361
forest and from which hunting is conducted, or village camps, those occupied by the Mbuti when they are visiting their villager neighbors.

**Band:** This refers to the total Mbuti hunting P
population, regardless of kinship, that recog- 121
nizes and utilizes a common hunting territory. 128
The band may occupy a single camp or split 104
into several camps within the same territory. 621 •

**Village:** The settlement of the Bantu and Z
Sudanic cultivators who have pressed into the 121
forest. Such a village is likely to have a much 128
more clear-cut kinship composition and politi- 104
cal identity than an Mbuti band. 621

**Villager:** This term, unless otherwise Z
stated, may be taken to refer to any of the cul- 101
tivators in the Ituri Forest, Bantu or Sudanic, 128
with whom the Mbuti have contact. The use of 104
the different tribal names, such as Bira, Ndaka, Lese, and so forth, would not only be unnecessarily cumbersome but suggest that the relationship varied significantly according to the structure of each individual villager tribe, whereas it seems, for the moment at least, that

[P.147-D]

**GROUP:** Whereas I
have in the original sur- P
vey, and elsewhere, used the term "group" as I 121
now use the term "band," particularly when 128
translating from the German (*Lokalgruppe*), I 104
now use the term "band" as above, and use 621 •
"group" only generally to distinguish, say,
archers from net hunters, or Mbuti from villagers.

The Bantu Prefix: This has been dropped P
throughout whenever I refer to persons or ob- 2
jects. Thus we talk of the Bira, Ndaka, and 101
Mbuti rather than the BaBira, BaNdaka, or 104
BaMbuti. This change is in consonance with 128
the current practice of the International Afri- 193
can Institute. However, we retain the "Ki" prefix to indicate language—KiBira, KiNdaka, KiMbuti.

Indigenous terms, except for place, proper, or P 2
personal names, are italicized. 128

Illustrations have been added. These do not set out to represent the total material culture of the Mbuti, but were drawn from the collections of the American Museum by Mr. Nicholas Amorosi.

[P. 148-B]

114 128 the *molimo.*[1] I was particularly fortunate in obtaining the material I did, and I include it because it helps to fill out the most detailed body of facts available on any single Pygmy hunting band. The fact that all this material does deal with a single band (or is used only in so far as it does) perhaps excuses the somewhat haphazard way in which it has been amassed. Obviously a single field study by one trained anthropologist would be preferable, but it is not available. Inclusion here of the notes on my 1957–1958 field trip would create an imbalance. As it is, the material is used only in the presentation of facts, and there is no reason to doubt their authenticity. If there is any fault in this joint source on the Epulu Mbuti, it is this possible fault of omission rather than any of commission.

101 131 621 The area that this band of Pygmies hunts lies to the north of the Epulu River and west of

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[192] [1] Much confusion arises through common and loose usage of the term *lusumba* among all villagers of the area. The *lusumba*, also *esumba*, seems to originate as an Ngwana magical ceremony. This is distinct from both the Bira *molimo* and the *molimo* of the Mbuti, although the terms are often used interchangeably by villagers.

[P. 158-C]
the River Nduye (Fig. 3). The band is a rela- 101
tively large one and shows some interesting 131
tendencies toward fission. It did not always 621
move as a single hunting unit. Sometimes a part
of the band would be several days' journey off
in the forest, while the rest remained at the
village named Camp Putnam. Mrs. Putnam 000
frequently visited the hunting band at its various camps, when of latter years Patrick Putnam was more or less entirely confined by his illness to the village.

Linguistically the band falls into Schebesta's 197
Sua category, using KiBira for the most part as their camp language. They also use a great many KiLese words, however, and the local Bira affirm that they frequently cannot understand what they call "KiMbuti," though they recognize it to be basically KiBira. Like the Bira villagers, these Pygmies also speak some KiNgwana, the *lingua franca* of the territory.

101 The term "Bambuti" was first applied by
Schebesta (1933) to the Sua net hunters only,
but after his second visit to the Ituri he
widened his usage to include all the Ituri
Pygmies (Schebesta, 1937). This is the sense in
which it seems to be used by the Pygmies themselves
and in which we use the term in this
[197] study. The threefold linguistic subdivision of
the Mbuti is the only attempt that has yet
been made to divide the Mbuti into separate
groups, but it is not yet certain how far this
division has any anthropological validity. It is
[619] impossible to speak of Mbuti tribes or subtribes,
[614] and, although a number of clan names
are known, no material available enables us to
trace any semblance of a clan system. The only
621 certain units are the nuclear family and the
602 economic association of a number of such
[594] families that form a hunting band. Schebesta
(1948, 288 ff.) makes this point, using the terms
"*Familie*" and "*Sippe.*" He distinguishes
"*Sippe*" from "*Grossfamilie,*" the former being
primarily an economic association of incidentally
related families and the second laying the
emphasis on common descent. The coalescence
[614] of several "*Grossfamilie*" into a clan is a concept
of little significance to the Pygmy, and the clan,
Schebesta writes, is in any case widely dispersed.

621 The size of these hunting bands varies,
162 [p.160-B]

[P.160-C]

among the archers from three to 37 huts,[1] but averages about six huts per hunting band (termed "*Lokalgruppe*" by Schebesta, 1948). The net-hunter bands are larger, averaging around 15 huts per hunting band. The particular Epulu band to be considered was an exceptionally large and fluid one, in itself varying from 10 to 30 huts. In practice it often became two hunting bands. Both Schebesta and Putnam agree that hunting bands do occasionally combine for some special hunting project, but that such alliances are temporary and rare. The Putnam material indicates that, even when such an association does take place, each band rigorously maintains its separate identity, building adjacent but separate camps. 621 162 621 628

Each single hunting band, among both archers and net hunters, has its own defined hunting area, but until more material is available it is impossible to learn in what other ways the forest is thought of as being divided. 621 224 423

1, [See footnote, bottom of p.160-D --Analyst]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Schebesta (1934) estimates the total population of the Ituri Mbuti to be more than 35,000, in an area of approximately 100,000 kilometers; Putnam's estimate was 40,000 within the same area. Lloyd (1899) gives the Pygmy population as fewer than 10,000, using information given to him by a Pygmy in the Central Ituri. According to this information the Pygmies inhabited the forest for a distance of seven days' march from east to west, and six days from north to south; and that there were 40 chiefs, each with from 40 to 200 followers, a few with as many as 500. There is no official count that can be drawn on, but Schebesta and Putnam both traveled extensively through the entire Ituri area, and the closeness of their estimates favors the acceptance of their figures as fair approximations. Lloyd's reference is interesting in that it gives some indication of what an individual Pygmy considers to be the extent of the Mbuti and their territory. 161 [621]

Reviewing his interpretation of demographic data collected on his first two visits to the Congo, as set out in "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri," Schebesta (1952, 50–53) later says that among the Efe archers the average number of children born to each woman is three, of which two survive. He also finds that there is a 163 165 162

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[1] Each hut represents a nuclear family—man, wife, and unmarried children.

[P.160-D]

# THE ARCHERS (AFTER SCHEBESTA)

## [P.167-A] THE SOCIAL UNIT

• 621 THE MOST IMPORTANT SOCIAL UNIT is formed by
the economic association of individual families
as hunting bands (*Lokalgruppen;* Schebesta,
1948, 304 ff.; 1952, 210) which vary in size.
Schebesta (1952, 208) gives the range as be-
tween two and 12 huts, averaging six huts per
621 band. They are said, in effect, to be patriline-
613 ages, but Schebesta stresses the importance of
the economic rather than the lineal ties; in his
German publications he uses the term "*Sippe,*"
in French "*Parentele.*" In German, he dis-
tinguishes the *Sippe* from the *Grossfamilie*, the
latter being more properly the lineage regarded
in its kinship context. The elder, who occupies
621 considerable prestige and has considerable per-
613 sonal authority over the *Grossfamilie*, is only
888 *primus inter pares* for the *Sippe* (Schebesta,
1948, 290). The prerogative of the elder depends
on age, and these *avi-tiri*, or old ones, according
to Schebesta, are endowed with the authority
and dignity of the ancestors. Their power is
limited by custom and tradition.

[ARCHERS]

439 This trade relationship has been noticed by
177 many of the earlier travelers, some of whom
referred to it as "silent trade" (notably Burrows, 1898), while others found it to be quite
[114] open (Lloyd, 1899). But Schebesta (1941) is
inconsistent in attributing it to the inadequacy
of the environment, which, in the same work, he
claims is responsible, through its very abundance, for the lack of advance in Pygmy culture. Nor does he indicate precisely how the
[613] trading is carried out. He says that there is,
however, a definite hereditary relationship
between Efe archer and Lese villager lineages.

594

## SOCIAL LIFE

### Family Organization

[342] Individual families each have their own beehive- or tunnel-shaped hut, a stick frame hung
with phrynium leaves (p. 167). Schebesta (1933,
219–220; 1952, 154) reports once having seen a
gigantic windscreen housing several families in
an otherwise normal camp. Although each
[621] family emphasizes its individuality by separate
residence, as a social unit it is far less significant
[613] than the band (a patrilineage, according to
Schebesta) of which it is a part and outside
which it could not exist.

[P. 176-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 176-C]

The huts are built by women, and each wom- 592
an regards this part of the camp as her prop- [462]
erty. It is there that the family lives: the food is
prepared and cooked over a fire in front of the
hut entrance; the children play near the hut;
the husband sits by the fire, doing odd jobs,
guarding the food in his wife's absence, or help-
ing her in some way or another. Visitors do not
enter the hut but wait outside where they meet
any member of the family. Owing to the custom 621 •
of exogamy of hunting bands, allegedly on a 628
patrilineal-patrilocal basis,[1] the married women 609
may all be strangers to one another. In some 582
cases most of the women come from the same 591
neighboring band, so their communal interest is [613]
greater, but generally they come from widely [594]
dispersed bands and are more interested in their
own marital families than they are in their new
band as a whole. The men, however, are bound
by the strongest ties of kinship and mutual
interest in the band, as such, and in the particu-
lar territory within which it moves. Conflict [578]
between the hunting band and individual fam-
ily, then, is generally a conflict between men
and women, and, by enlargement, between two
or more bands—the band of the men and those
of the women involved.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

The woman becomes interested in her husband's 602
band's or lineage and becomes a part of it 562
only to the extent by which she enriches it with 621
children. The more children she gives to the
band the greater her interest in it, and reciprocally
the greater the band's interest in her. The [593]
greater her authority and that of her natal
family and band, the greater the parity between
man and wife in the individual family. But at [613]
all times the husband's lineage is responsible for
her welfare and answerable to her own lineage
in default.

A hunting band may, under certain circumstances, 621
welcome male outsiders (*Sippenfremd*) 609
into the community; as, for example, when a
wife cannot integrate herself into her new home
and returns to her own band, her husband
deciding to go with her. Children may in some
cases be brought up in their mother's band.
These outsiders occupy a position similar to [613]
that occupied by married women in their husbands'
bands; they remain members of their

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[1] **In my own experience, among both archers and net hunters, patrilineal descent systems and patrilocality are no more than trends, most bands being effectively cognatic territorial units.** [184]

[P.176-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.177-A]

621 609 613 own lineages and can at all times return to them or count on their aid, but economically they are members of the lineage with which they are living.

462 512 592 Among the archers a woman's daily activity is concerned primarily with the welfare of the individual family and only indirectly with that of the band. She takes no part in the hunt (unless it is the rare *begbe* hunt; see p. 172), and her gathering activities, which may be undertaken alone or with friends, benefit her own family only. [854] She carries her youngest baby on her hip or her back, and the rest of the children play together or follow her about. She collects the wood for the family fire, and the materials for building and repairing her house.

593 594 621 Her husband spends less time near the family hut. He is more concerned with the welfare of the band than that of his own family. The children are more attached to their mother than to their father, except for the older boys who gradually transfer their loyalty to the band as a whole. 593 594 264 Schebesta (1952, 214) reports that in general, however, a family eats together, though the father may eat apart with his sons. The separation by sex at meal times is more of a villager custom.

[ARCHERS]

All activities outside the camp cease at night, with the exception of termite hunting which is conducted at whatever time of the day or night termites are found to be swarming. 512 222

### Conception and Childbirth

The normal course of daily life runs uninterrupted throughout the year, except when camp is moved, or on ceremonial occasions attendant on birth, puberty, marriage, and death. Of these occasions, it seems from Schebesta's account that birth arouses the least public interest. The band welcomes each birth gladly but at the same time accepts it as no more than its due. The wives of its menfolk are expected to produce children; it is their primary function in the eyes of both the band and their husbands, and even in their own eyes. 844 (512) 844 621 [562]

The Pygmies seem to believe that menstrual blood is an important factor in conception (Schebesta, 1948, 399) and are well aware of the connection between coition and conception (1948, 400). Schebesta reports frequently hearing the opinion expressed that repeated coition would hasten the hour of birth. 842 833 [841]

[P. 177 - D]

[ARCHERS]

P [P, 180-A]
Z society. Schebesta also mentions other instruments
881 particularly associated with *nkumbi* (and
177 the secret society) among the south Lese,
608 namely: the bull-roarer (*pahudjuhudju* or
534 *hudjuhudju*); a flute (*likuru*); a singing pot
(*pengi*); and the large wooden trumpet (*asaragba*).
Z The invitation to the Mbuti to take part
[563] in the *nkumbi* is one of the ways in which the
villagers seek to maintain and extend their
control over the Pygmies.

Z Schebesta concludes that we must distinguish
P two elements in the *nkumbi*: the villager element
881 of initiation associated with circumcision
177 and, quite distinct from it, the Pygmy element
P of initiation into the men's secret society (*toré*).
[576]

## MARRIAGE

P
581 Schebesta (1948, 343) writes that it is difficult
584 to determine which is the stronger, the interests
621 of the hunting band or the interests and mutual
affection of the two individuals concerned.

[ARCHERS]

584 Marriage is certainly an economic factor of the
• 62 greatest importance to the band, and the decision
[581] of the elders usually prevails. But according
to Schebesta, if there is particularly ardent
affection between an unmarried couple, they
may be strong enough to resist group opinion
even to the point of ignoring its just claims, in
which case a compromise will be reached by the
bands concerned. Although there may be preferences
for marriage between certain bands, no
marriage is arranged with disregard for individual
inclinations. Each union is usually preceded
by a period of flirtation and courtship.

613 The rule of exogamy bars any flirtation
62 within a hunting band that consists of a single
832 lineage. If the band consists of two lineages,
there may be flirtation but controlled by the
parents, the mother keeping an eye on her
daughter, and the fathers or lineage heads
[836] watching over the boys. Schebesta believes that
in spite of such supervision there is, in fact,
great premarital freedom, though always outside
the bounds of exogamic prohibition. For
[684] the Efe, he records what appears to be a borrowed
[177] custom of making payments to the father
of the girl, or to her mother, either for the privilege
of having an affair with their daughter or as
a penalty for being discovered.[1]

---

[839] [1] Masturbation (*ai ofuni*), homosexuality (*ai bopa*), and
[838] adultery are known among the archers, but rarely. Lesbians
(*dora bopa*) are unknown. Mbuti who practice such behavior
are regarded by men with derision; women have a
particular horror of homosexuals.

[P. 180 - B]

[ARCHERS]

Philters are also used by Mbuti girls. One further 000 possible obstacle to marriage, outside 582 normal rules of exogamy, exists among the 621 archers: marriage is prohibited between two bands associated by common marriage ties with a third band. Thus if Bands A and B habitually marry with Band C, then intermarriage between Bands A and B is forbidden.[2] Restrictions on marrying into one's matrilineage apply only to the first generation; a child may not marry into its mother's band.

A number of early sources mention marriage 583 by purchase (Casati, 1891; Stuhlman, 1894; Burrows, 1898). Czekanowski (1924), relying on information from neighboring villager tribes, writes of marriage both by purchase and by service and apparently learned nothing of marriage by exchange among the Mbuti. Schebesta [191] (1948, 366) writes that, while marriage by purchase is the custom among the village tribes of the Ituri, Mbuti marriage is distinguished by being essentially by sister exchange. Otherwise the man may offer a quiver of arrows, five chickens, [439] and 10 hoes (cited for *Eba-eba* camp); and among the southern archers chickens, hoes, spears, and arrows are used—all obtained from the villagers by begging or by trade, never money. The archers of Banyari, on the edge of

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[2] It should be remembered that all the time Schebesta is [613] thinking of the *Lokalgruppe*, or band, primarily as a patrilineage.

[P. 180-D]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1
Mombu FO31
Lese

183 (B)

[ARCHERS]

P Schebesta (1948, 545) cites this burial as evidence
M of band and lineal solidarity (e.g., the
764 prominent part played by neighboring bands in
177 the funeral), and of the importance of the *karé*
171 relationship. Significant differences between
P the Mbuti and the Lese ceremonies were the
[621] absence, in the archer funeral, of the sacrifice of
[628] a hen over the grave, the absence of the official
[613] mourners in their clothes and white paint, of a
P goat offering, and above all of the absence of a
M long palaver, following the burial, to place the
[782] blame for the death. The question of blame did
[761] arise after the Mbuti burial described, but it
was the Lese who were primarily interested.
Nor, according to Schebesta, does a death have
such far-reaching social consequences among
the archers as among their villager neighbors.

## SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Z
P The relationship between the Efe archers and
177 their villager neighbors is mentioned above.
439 The two peoples are associated in a hereditary
608 system, based on trade, strengthened by the

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P. 183-C]

Z
*karé* relationship, and the practice of joint P
initiation and circumcision. 177
439

Among themselves the archers also practice 608
a form of blood brotherhood, but the two major P
bonds are membership in the same economic 621 •
local band and membership (with much wider 602
extension) in the same secret society which the [608]
archers call *toré*. Schebesta (1948, 290) points [575]
out that a sense of tribal identity is totally lack- [61]
ing, that "clans" are dispersed and have neither
political nor economic significance, and that
even lineages, which in effect are the local
hunting bands, are usually most properly
viewed as economic entities. He gives neither P
genealogies nor any indication of any complex 621
system of kinship terminology, nor any other 602
evidence that kinship ties might be of extensive 114
importance. There is even little evidence to
support his allegation that the hunting band is P
a lineal entity. It appears throughout that the [591]
major unifying factor is one of common resi-
dence.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

Costermans further agrees with Junker P
(1889–1891, vol. 3, 92) that many of the 622
northern archers have recently themselves 184
taken to a system of chieftainship. They lead 178
their nomadic existence under the jurisdiction 621 •
of a chief and in every way preserve their freedom under this jurisdiction. If there is any disagreement, however, they leave and place themselves under a neighboring chief. But not nearly enough information is given for any understanding of the structure of this "system."

Schebesta seems to stand between the two P
extremes with regard to the archers whom he 2
studied. He stresses the economic dependency 439
of the Mbuti on the villagers, and also, as does 177
Putnam (1948), the personal aspect of the relationship. 571
He does not agree with Costermans [114]
that the archers change their allegiance at the slightest provocation. He regards the ***nkumbi***, P
with its creation of ***karé*** relationships between 2
individual Mbuti and villagers, as a major [881]
factor in maintaining villager authority over [608]
the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors.

[P. 185-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 186-A]

000 the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors.

## Legal System

671 421 There is virtually no evidence from which any conclusions can be drawn about the legal system of the Efe archers or even of the nature of the sanctions that uphold social behavior. Schebesta (1941, 275 ff.; 1948, 533 ff.) points out, however, that, though the Mbuti function at one of the lowest known stages of economic development, they recognize both private and collective ownership and there is a definite property law.

421 621 628 The district hunted by the band, together with all the vegetable and animal food contained in that district and also raw materials used in Pygmy technology, is the collective property of the band. All members of the band share equal rights. Alien bands are tolerated only to the limit that the resident band desires to extend hospitality. The boundaries of the various territories, generally well known to all, are considered inviolable. If an animal is [224] hunted across a boundary and killed there, it belongs to the band in whose territory it was killed. If the neighboring bands are on good terms, they usually share the spoil.

[P.186-C] [ARCHERS]

Schebesta (1948,533) argues that, as the 888
representative of the lineage, the elder is also 613
the guarantor of its law and is responsible for 685
the respect of collective and private property. 627
In the case of theft, the lineage thus offended [421]
demands satisfaction from the elder. Elders of different lineages settle disputes between them and must explain the settlement and plead reason with their own lineage. In disputes with villagers, it is the elder who accepts the responsibility for the wrongdoings of any individual member of his lineage, and the lineage must provide any agreed compensation. This transfer of responsibility from individual to lineage does not, however, diminish individual responsibility; if anything, it increases the responsibility as the injury to the lineage would probably be considered a worse offense than the one originally committed.

Individuals use the lineage in this way to 613
affirm their rights against offenses such as theft 68
and adultery. The band, as a whole, will take [621] •
arms to defend its collective property and pun- [628]
ish any violation of territory. Murder and homi- [888]
cide are followed by feud, which is directed by the elder, leaving, however, a large measure of initiative to the individuals involved. No examples, however, are given by Schebesta.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 192-A]

613 614 hunting band, or, if the latter becomes too large, both clan and band may split into two or more bands. The relationship of several bands or lineages as members of the same clan is generally designated by the use of a common name, [621] ancestor, and totem. One band is distinguished from another, regardless of relationship, by individual territorial names, but apart from identity of ancestor and totem there is no effective structure binding together the clan, if dispersed. There is no clan chief, and no clan territory (except for a very small clan that happens also to be a hunting band). Even clan exogamy cannot be said to be rigidly enforced; the invariable rule, rather, is exogamy of the local lineage or hunting bands.

[825] Totems are generally animals, rarely plants, never natural phenomena. Schebesta cites the leopard and the chimpanzee as being the commonest totems. A man and wife observe each other's totemic restrictions in each other's presence or when with each other's group; simi-

# THE NET HUNTERS (AFTER PUTNAM)

[P. 194-A]

## THE SOCIAL UNIT

621 [114] PATRICK PUTNAM'S (1948) DESCRIPTION of the net-hunting Pygmy band corresponds in essence to that given by Schebesta; the most noticeable difference is in the matter of size. [614] [594] The composition described is the same, i.e., a number of nuclear families tracing descent through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named.

[361]

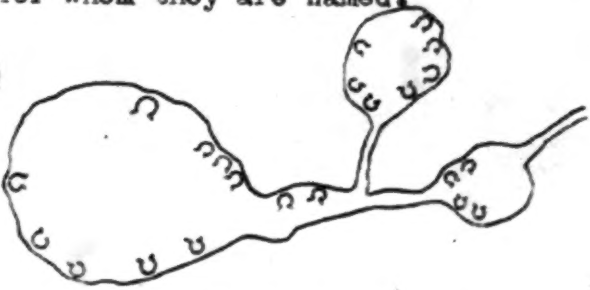

FIG. 16. Plan of net-hunters' camp (after Anne Putnam), Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[614] for whom they are named. The patriclan, however, is generally scattered and is certainly not synonymous with the band. The size of the band is determined at each extreme by the hunting and gathering needs of a cohabitive group.

[NET HUNTERS]

621 group. Fifty huts is the maximum given by
361 Putnam, with 25 the average and between 20
and 40 the optimum. Each hut houses a man,
[592] his wife or wives, and a few children, so the
[162] total number of Pygmies to an] average camp is

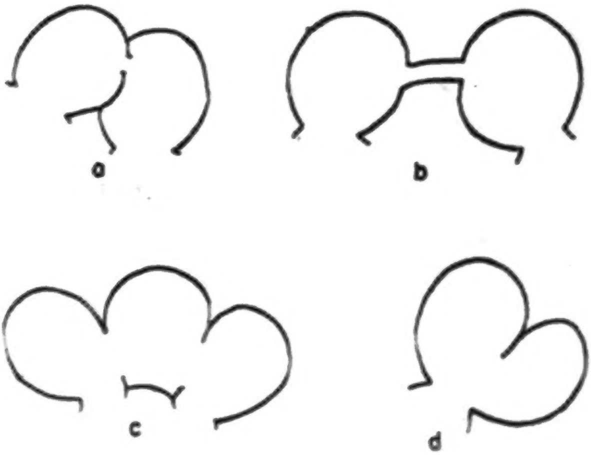

FIG. 17. Plan of net-hunters' polygynous or extended family dwellings (after Anne Putnam), Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[P. 194-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.194-C] 621

about 150, with from 20 to 40 active adult 361
males. 592
162

Anne Putnam, whose experience was con-
fined more to the net hunters of the Epulu re- 361
gion, mentions 17 huts as constituting a large 342
camp (Fig. 16), some of the huts, however, [114]
possibly being in the form of double huts (Fig.
17). Huts are continually being enlarged or re-

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 195-A]

[NET HUNTERS] **The relation of the huts to one another in the** circle is dictated, as much as anything, by the friendship of the women. (Their gathering activities do not demand cooperation, but Putnam says that they help one another for company, forming work groups of two or more adult women.) 361 621 [571]

There are frequent visitors to these camps, including villagers who come to claim, trade, or buy meat from the Pygmies. If a villager chief comes, a special hut is built for him. 574 439

## FURNITURE

352

The furnishings of a hut are similar to those described by Schebesta, and, like the archers, these net hunters keep their possessions to the minimum (Figs. 18–20). Leaves are used as furniture more frequently than either beds or stick chairs. The Pygmy will not sit on bare ground, and if a log is not available he will use a piece of bark or a leaf. [184] [516]

## UTENSILS

412 439

Also as with the archers, utensils are largely borrowed or stolen from the villagers who make them (Fig. 21). The net hunters do not imitate their neighbors, however, to the extent of making mortars for themselves. If they possess mortars, they are extremely small, unlike the large ones described by Schebesta, which could not easily be carried from camp to camp by a [177]

[P. 195-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 197-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

224 184 The Pygmy has no use for traps or pits. These require too much work and are, by his standards, inefficient. Throughout the Ituri the Mbuti can be classified as net hunters or non-net hunters or, conversely, as archers or non-archers. Putnam states that this adherence to either hunting technique depends on the prevailing villager custom, as the villagers supply the Pygmies with both nets and arrowheads. Later, he modified this view because the Pygmies are, in fact, making nets all the time by adding to and subtracting from their existing nets, as mentioned above. [Schebesta (1933) refers to the Pygmies as making their own nets.] • [C21] [476] This division into archers and net hunters is also significant with regard to social organization, says Putnam (1948, 328), since "The degree to which co-operation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band."

[P.202- B]

[NET HUNTERS]

224 according to specific custom (details not given),
after which a share may be sent to the villagers.
Putnam says that the average catch for a day
is half an antelope (the size of a goat) per man
[281] (i.e., per family). Skins are stretched on frames,
or staked out on the ground, for drying (Figs.
32–33).

224 Anne Putnam gives the hunting rules as told
426 to her by one of the great hunters of the Epulu
group. From these rules it appears that a net owner, if he lends his net to another, has varying claims according to the number of animals that fall into the net during any one day. The liver always belongs to the net owners, while the head, and a leg or legs if more than one animal is caught, go to the hunter. If an antelope gets caught in two nets, or escapes from one into another, the two net owners share it. If an animal becomes entangled and escapes without cutting the net and is subsequently caught, it belongs to the net owner. If, however, it cuts the net, then it belongs to whoever kills it.

224 Anne Putnam also gives the positions of net
• 621 owners in the hunting circle of a large band of
554 three combined hunting bands. Apparently,
while the junior members of the two visiting
628 bands tend to keep to themselves at each extremity of the line of nets, the main (host)

[P. 204-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 204-C]

group occupies the center, with the important hunters from all three bands occupying the most central positions. Figure 16 gives the plan of the camp, showing the separation of these three "bands". In fact they are more likely segments of the same band in the process of fission. 224 621 628 554

Net hunters do not use bows and arrows (Figs. 37–39) to any appreciable extent, and they are poor archers. Putnam, in his travels throughout the forest, found few really good archers. He says that they shoot arrows with great rapidity, but that only one out of five may 224 411

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 205-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

of his own creation. But among the Epulu net 648
hunters, and other central and western groups, 184
in which village tribal structure has not been so 177
greatly affected, the relationship is still, in Put- 571
nam's opinion, intensely personal between individual and individual, or family and family.
The superficial dissatisfaction manifest between
Pygmy and villager over their trade relationship [439)
is a result of and symbolizes the present
stratification with the villager at the upper end
of the scale and hides the inner feelings of loyalty and affection that Putnam says exists between the two groups.

## SOCIAL LIFE

### Family Organization

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For the most part the family organization [582]
among the net hunters is the same as that described by Schebesta for the archers, and, as with [184]
them, some of the women come from different
bands and are strangers to one another. The net
hunting camps are larger, however, than those
of the archers, and it is seldom that a bride finds
herself a total stranger in her new home. Fur- 621
ther, because of the differences in hunting tech- 476
nique, cooperative feeling among the women of 184
a net-hunting band is much stronger than that 562

[P. 211-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

184 [P.212-A]
621 in a band of archers. Women are vital to the
476 hunt and have their own part to play in it. In
562 addition, they must undertake all the duties
[462] and responsibilities described by Schebesta: the
building and care of the home, gathering vegetable food, and, above all, the raising of a fam-
621 ily. Putnam's notes do not give much infor-
562 mation on the status of women, but it would
184 seem to be fully as high as that of women among the archers, according to Schebesta, and also proportional, to a certain extent, to their fertility. The net-hunter band has the same responsibilities to its men's womenfolk as does the archer band.

593 The man, however, spends relatively more
[184] time with his wife and family than can an archer. When the band is large enough, several families may stay behind while the others go
[512] hunting. On such occasions the womenfolk may go gathering, at which time the men attend to their various chores such as the manufacture of barkcloth, repair of hunting nets, and other specifically male duties, or else the women may find work to do in the camp, in which they are aided by their husbands. The men are good fathers and, contrary to Schebesta's assertion for the archers, take pleasure in looking after their children, playing with them, and amusing them with stories and mime.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

594
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574 The wives never lose their feelings for their own band, and a woman will either invite some of her relatives to visit her, or else will go, with her husband and children, to visit her own family.

593
• 621 The family hut is merely a place for sleeping: all other family activity takes place outside.
[571] There is, then, considerable interaction between one family and another. During the evening this applies particularly to the womenfolk, as at this time the men gather in a group by themselves. Family life is anything but private, and a dispute between a husband and his wife is taken up all over the camp.
[184] As with the archers, the authority of the mother over her children is fully equal to that of the father, and this is one of the most common sources of quarrel. As boys grow older they tend to spend less time near their hut and more with the men, so they come under the influence of the band rather than the individual family.

602 There is no information regarding relationships between affines, avoidance or otherwise.
[P. 212-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

apart from the villagers, whatever the origin of 881
the actual ceremonies. 177
171

### MARRIAGE

Putnam is able to cite several cases of con- 58
flict over marriage, proposed or accomplished, [578]
and while such conflict may secondarily be [621] ●
between two lineages, it is primarily between [613]
the hunting band (whether it composes a single
lineage or more than one) and the individual
concerned. Putnam mentions neither arranged
marriages nor the betrothal of infants, although
there may be bands with whom marriage is
preferred. The net-hunting Mbuti themselves
simply say "the further away the better,"
referring to geographical distance. Kinship dis- [613]
tance means little to them, though all cite
general rules of bilateral lineage exogamy.

Putnam says that the hunting band is 58
meant to be an exogamous unit, but that in 621

[P. 219-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.220-A]

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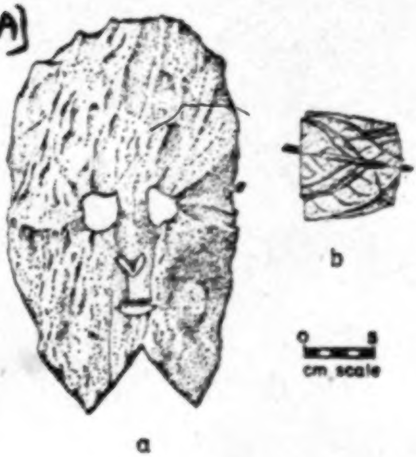

FIG. 48. Initiation masks, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Bark mask, worn by Bira and Ndaka initiators during the preliminary *nkumbi* dances. b. Leaf mouth-mask, worn in mouth of initiates when paraded through village.

P
58
● 621

fact marriages within the band occur and are in fact often favored as they can be arranged without any ceremony. Ceremony occurs, he says, only when a marriage involves two different bands. Intra-band marriage is made possible, even within the bounds of lineage exogamy, by the practice of maintaining a number of "resident aliens." A net-hunting camp, always

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[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 220-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

**A net-hunting camp, always** 621 582
larger than that of archers, may not only be comprised of two or more different lineages but will also nearly always include a number of visitors who may originally have come to visit female relatives and who, for one reason or another, settled permanently. Putnam also mentions the frequency of adoption and foster-parenthood. While he says an Mbuti will never knowingly marry another related to him on either side (he does not give the degree of relationship), he has no qualms when only social parenthood is involved. 597 608 582

A further advantage to marriage within the band is that it does not immediately upset the economic balance, so provides a loophole in the usual requirements of exchange marriage. Putnam does not say, however, exactly what the economic status is in the band of resident alien families or of the offspring resulting from intermarriage between them and other band members. From what can be observed and from cases cited, common residence seems to be the most significant factor. 621 58 [591]

[P.220-C]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Living as he does in the present, the most P 621
important consideration for the Mbuti is the 571
present constitution of the band. Absent [613]
members of the band, regardless of lineage, are
soon forgotten as economic members, though
lineal ties will be remembered for as long as any
Mbuti remembers such ties (not more than
three generations). Consequently, the question
of economic allegiance among the net hunters
does not arise even for the first generation P
resident aliens, let alone for their offspring. [594]
Any considerations that do arise are invariably
connected with the relationship between the P
individual family and its villager host. When an 571
Mbuti changes his residence, he automatically 177
changes his allegiance to the local villagers who 166
act as patrons of his new band. The villager, on Z
the other hand, does not so easily adjust him- 563
self to losing a Pygmy. He tries by threats and 571
bribery to get the Pygmy back to his own dis- 177
trict but, failing that, will take action against
the newly adopted villager patron.

It is plain that the band as an economic P
unit is the effective unit for net-hunting Mbuti, 621
and that its welfare, together with individual 581
inclination, should be the prime concern when a 582
question of marriage arises. When the marriage
is within the band and there is no immediate
change in its economic constitution, there is no
concern, providing the general niceties of

[P.220-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-A]

621 exogamy have been observed. When it is
581 between two bands, then the Mbuti prefer
582 them to be as far apart as possible. The trouble
628 they envisage in a marriage with a member of a
58 nearby band is friction between themselves and
571 the village patron of the incoming bride. He
177 will constantly assert every claim he has, or
thinks he has, to her services, even to her
children when she revisits her own band. As
628 far as the two Mbuti bands are concerned, such
583 a marriage would be on an exchange basis, thus
maintaining the economic balance of each band.
[584] If the groom's band cannot find a suitable
girl to offer, his mother's band may be asked to
find one. There is always the alternative of
compensation or service, or both. For compensation
the help of the village patron is usually
sought, and the marriage is arranged by him.
[585] Such marriages are usually subject, in the
first place, to the normal Mbuti custom, which
involves no ceremony other than a mutually
agreeable exchange and a token offering of
gifts, such as a few arrows.

[NET HUNTERS]

• 621 888 At the same time every man in the band has a full say in any discussion. There may well not be the placid acceptance of the "elder's" decision described by Schebesta (1952, 221 ff.). For one thing, among the net hunters the old men themselves may disagree. But again, unfortunately, we do not have details as to the subjects most or least open to dispute, so can give only a general account.

623 554 Additional information on this point comes from the notes of Anne Putnam, in which a loose form of council of five or six of the older men is reported. Each one of these is said by Mrs. Putnam to have some specific sphere of authority such as the regulation of hunting activities, settlement of interpersonal and other disputes, but further details are not given. No evidence is offered that they act in council rather than simply in their individual capacities. In the particular band to which Mrs. Putnam refers, however, five or six of the older men included the most experienced hunters in the whole band, so that only the aged and infirm, the children, and the younger and less experienced hunters would *not* be members of the "council." [157] According to Putnam, the Mbuti respect experience as well as age, so that an individual's experience in a particular field increases his authority in that field. Thus the "council"

[P. 228-B]

[P. 228-C] [NET HUNTERS]

is almost certainly informal, because special authority within it is the result of individual qualities rather than of hereditary title to any particular office. Nowhere is there mention of any formal constitution of the council or hereditary tenure of office. Mrs. Putnam's information serves to confirm Putnam's assertion that there is no formal leadership, that any question that arises is settled by discussion, and that there is no single leader in such discussion, though respect is given to the older and more experienced men. 623 554 [57]

Nowhere is there any mention of any representative of the lineage or clan ancestors, or any indication that the lineage as such is of any importance in government. The net-hunting bands, it will be remembered, are larger than those of the archers and are more often comprised of more than one lineage. 621 613 614 [184]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

## Relationships Between Bands

There is no account of formal relationships between different bands of net hunters. Informal relationships are created through interband visits. These visits may be made by individual Pygmies or by whole families and may be occasioned by the desire (particularly among womenfolk) to see relatives or to seek a spouse, or by some dispute leading to ostracism, or by trouble between the individual concerned and his villager patron. The visits, according to Putnam, may become permanent but normally last only two or three months, which would allow for one or two changes of camp. These visits are important with respect to the practice of exchange marriage and lineage exogamy (which may amount to exogamy of the hunting band, though among the net hunters less frequently than among the archers) as an important way of allowing marriageable couples to meet and become known to each other's families. 628 574 [584] [613] [184]

Occasionally two or even three bands join to form a single hunting unit. Under these circumstances each sets up separate but adjoining camps. If, as may happen though rarely, this association continues, the camps are moved closer to each other and finally become part of the same camp. In one of the final stages of the process of fusion, the two groups build their huts in the same clearing, but each as a distinct unit. Similarly, fission may be preceded by a gradual physical splitting of the camp. Each 628 476 361 [578] [621]

[P. 228-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

P
628 [P.229-A]
476 change of camp may thus reveal significant
361 tendencies not only in interpersonal relations
578 but also in the composition of the band itself.
• 621

### Relationships Between Mbuti and Villagers

P Putnam had the advantage of being able to
177 observe the changes in composition of the Epulu
571 hunting band and its ties with neighboring villagers
Z for more than two decades. As is stated
563 above, the relationship between the net hunters
571 and their villager neighbors is an individual and
strongly personal relationship, as described by
P Schebesta (p. 185). The effect is that of an inherited
Z [428] relationship, but inheritance is not the
basis. The effect is maintained only by the closeness
of the personal bonds of loyalty and affection.
If these bonds are weakened through any
cause, there is nothing to stop the Pygmy from
changing his allegiance to another villager. It
Z may cause bad feeling between him and his patron,
[628] but it primarily affects the relationship between
the two villagers concerned.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 230-A]

422 owned or merely possessed by the individual is not answerable at the moment. It would seem that utensils are in fact owned by the women and spears and bows and arrows by the men, but hunting nets appear to be subject to collective control, not only over their positioning during the hunts but also over their participation itself. Further, it is recorded in the notes that on occasion a hunting net that has not produced game for the community may be burned. All we know is that, when it is burned it is done with the approval of the community, though apparently on the initiative of the
428 "owning" family. There is no detailed information on inheritance, only the general observation that girls inherit from their mothers, men from their fathers.

421 It seems, first, that the forest and both its animal and vegetable produce are considered by
[186] the net hunters to be the property of the Mbuti as a whole, as opposed to the alien
[621] villagers. Second, it seems that any one section of the forest belongs to the band that hunts that section. But, although the band may be said to own a part of the forest and its members have an equal right to the produce, the equality is of opportunity rather than of division. A

[NET HUNTERS]

[p.231-A]

627 to sleep and how he was to rebuild his house.
684 His wife, who would normally have undertaken
this task, was sick. He was offered hospitality
for the remainder of the night by other relatives, and early in the morning the offended
family were themselves assisting him to rebuild
his hut. During this dispute no mention was
made of the fate of the transgressor.

• 621 This particular band was composed of two
627 major segments. The dispute was confined to
684 one segment and almost exclusively, though
not quite, to the two families concerned. Other
[613] members of that lineage came forward only to
appease and compromise.

The other segment, separated by a few hundred feet (the band was in the process of fission), listened eagerly to the dispute, making comments among themselves, mainly to the effect that the boy was a fool to have allowed himself to be found out and deserved to be beaten. When the pursuit of the boy led through their part of the camp, they hid. The older men carefully shut themselves up and refused to take any part in the proceeding.

[NET HUNTERS]

621 Younger men, regardless of family or lineage
627 ties, brought food to the transgressor, who
684 stayed outside the camp for two days. His
reappearance on the third day caused no
excitement on either side. This must not be
taken as a full account of the incident. Undoubtedly
a great deal is not known about how
the settlement was effected, but it is useful to
show with what informality a serious transgression
can be dealt with.

571 The intimate nature of a Pygmy camp is
stressed by Putnam. Even in the middle of the
night, when people are inside their huts, a conversation
at one end of the camp can be clearly
heard at the opposite end. Thus, even a matrimonial
578 squabble may well become enlarged
627 until it involves the entire band. Matrimonial
[593] disagreements and allegations of flirtation and
of selfishness or dishonesty in the division of
the meat are frequent causes for dispute. Disputes
[626] may be resolved entirely by self help,
which may involve a fight or a beating, by
public abuse or ridicule during the group discussion,
578 by ostracism, or exile. The group discussion,
626 mainly among men but with comments
562 hurled at them by their wives, is the main
regulatory mechanism. Both Schebesta and
Putnam agreed that the part played by the
women, who do not participate directly in these

[P. 231-B]

# ORIENTATION

There is little call for comment on this section. Despite their linguistic differences, it seems that the Ituri Mbuti form a broad cultural unit physically differentiated from other Pygmy or Pygmoid groups, notably the Twa of the Kivu area and the Tswa farther west. However, before any conclusion can be reached, we need more detailed studies, of the Pygmies of equatorial and western Africa in particular. 101

The hunting band appears to be the largest political unit, except in opposition to the villagers when, it seems, Pygmy bands may unite regardless of clan or lineage considerations. There is no evidence that, during the period when the Pygmies were used as mercenaries, they ever fought with one another at the behest of the villagers. 621 • 628 648

Despite Schebesta's assertion that *efe* is, in fact, the remnant of the original Mbuti language, linguists disagree on this point. Van Bulck (G. van Bulck, 1948, 1953; V. van Bulck, 1948, 1952) questions it. Professors Tucker and Meeussen (in conversation) indicate that the possibility of determining its correctness with any degree of certainty is remote. This attitude 197 114

[P.242-D]

While there may be one preferred "camp lan- 184
guage," most of the members of any one camp 197
speak three different languages with more or
less equal fluency. Each individual's linguistic
abilities depend to some extent on the direction
of his kinship ties and to some extent on his
attachment to one villager tribe or another.
The differences in social organization can be 184
related directly to differences in hunting tech- 224
nique. Concerned as we are with the situation 621 •
as we find it, we need not deal here with the 182
alleged origin of these hunting techniques nor
the relative "purity" of the Pygmy groups
practicing them.

The immediate and most obvious difference found in a comparison of the accounts of the archers and the net hunters is in the size of their hunting bands which is related directly to the requirements of the particular technique. A distinct process of fission and fusion related to the economic size of the band is observable among the Epulu Pygmies. A successful net hunt cannot be carried out with fewer than seven nets, with an optimum of about 15. When a net-hunting band falls below 10 families (i.e., 10 married men with nets), hunting becomes difficult, because there is little allowance for sickness, or for the men and women required to

[P. 243-D]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.244-A]

184 224 • 621 182 remain in camp to guard it and perform other duties. When the band falls below seven families, it can no longer exist. Similarly, when it rises above a certain number (between 20 and 30) it becomes too unwieldy to function as a single hunting unit and must, of necessity, split. Under these circumstances a compromise is reached, and very conveniently so, by the hunting from a forest camp by one section of the band, while the other section lives a more or less parasitical life near the village.

184 621 The composition of the bands of archers and net hunters seems to be similar, though Putnam lays more emphasis on the presence of visiting families. The archers live in considerably smaller bands, some interconnected through kinship ties and also allegedly through common allegiance to a villager lineage. In the larger net-hunting band there may very likely be no single villager attachment.

182 With regard to material culture and technology,
184 there is far more uniformity than divergence.
The technology of the net hunters demonstrates
a greater adaptation to the forest
environment, and their material culture is consistent
with the fact that they are more truly
[482] nomadic than the archers. Heavy objects such
as the mortars and drums mentioned by Schebesta
could not be maintained by a nomadic
band unless it was always within easy reach of
the village.

## ECONOMIC LIFE

224 In a comparison of the two major types of
184 hunt, according to which we classify the Mbuti
into archers and net hunters, three factors in
particular are worth noting:

1. The net hunt, of all the hunting methods
described (including the *begbe* beat of the archers),
produces both the surest and the largest
supply of meat. The inadequacy of archery
[411] among the Mbuti, owing partly to inaccuracy
[177] with their small bows and partly to the generally
[439] poor visibility, may account in part for
the greater economic dependence of the archer
bands on their villager neighbors.

2. The net hunt is essentially a cooperative
224 activity, requiring the participation of the band
476 as a whole, including women and children. It
62 reinforces the strength of the band as such; it
562 does not differentiate between the relationships
184 of the men and the women toward the forest;
and it establishes for each sex a basic and

[P. 244-B]

[P. 244-C]
mutually dependent and equally important role 224
in this, the major activity of the Mbuti. Arch- 476
ery, on the other hand, may be conducted on a 621 •
familial basis or, as is described by Schebesta, 562
with the cooperation of two or three men. It is 184
not essentially cooperative, and it does not include women and children, so placing the sexes in different relationships with the forest. In so far as hunting is the "superior" economic activity (though economically perhaps less important than gathering), it emphasizes the disparity of status between the sexes.

3. The net hunt, demanding close coopera- 184
tion and lack of specialization, is associated 554
with a more egalitarian political system than 561
that of the archers. While Schebesta described 224
an embryonic chieftainship, with powerful line- 621
age heads, Putnam vigorously denies the exis- [114]
tence of even a council of elders. Further, according to Putnam, whereas an old man is treated with respect, he is so only if age is accompanied by wisdom. A great hunter is respected regardless of his age. An unmarried boy of 16 who kills a buffalo with a spear is entitled to have a net of his own and to take full part in the meetings of the men's religious association. Such leadership as exists among the net hunters is charismatic, with little emphasis on lineage—a position quite the reverse of that described by Schebesta for the archers.

[P.245-C]

mere outward expression of an inevitable rela- 439
tionship brought about by territorial propin-
quity. It would certainly seem, from both
accounts, that there is no question of necessity
on either side. The Mbuti *can* gather all they
need, and the villagers *can* hunt, without having
to go far into the forest, by using traps, pits,
spear falls, and other means.

## SOCIAL LIFE

We indicate above some of the differences in 184
social life that may be attributed to differences 182
in hunting technique, notably because of the
cooperative nature of the net hunt. In the
material considered in the section on Social
Life (pp. 211–223), these differences may be ob-
served more directly. There is not only greater [562]
parity between the sexes among the net hunt- [593]
ers, but also the father enters more fully into
family life than among the archers. We would 184
connect this difference with the lesser impor- 613
tance of the lineage among the net hunters. 621
Schebesta (1948, 306–307) describes a "local
group" (i.e., an economic hunting unit) as being
primarily a lineage, under the authority of the

lineage elder. Owing to the prevailing rules of 184
exogamy, this means that the "local group" is 613
in fact the adult male community, to which are 621 •
attached the wives and unmarried sisters or
daughters. The "family" is primarily a separate, [594]
if not opposed, unit consisting of mothers and
their children (including boys up to their
*nkumbi* initiation). Schebesta (1948, 320 ff.)
does not deny the authority of the father in the [593]
family. Indeed, he gives it as a frequent source
of conflict between husband and wife, but it is
authority as a member of the lineage to which
his wife is a stranger rather than authority as a
father. Further, Schebesta (1948, 313 ff.) makes
no mention of women's associations other than
individual friendship of neighbors who may
work and gather together.

The picture we get from Putnam's account is 554
quite different. Among net hunters the band is 184
primarily an economic unit. There is no such 621
highly developed lineage feeling. Authority is [613]
vested not in any representative of the lineage
but rather in the economically important and
valuable members of the group. He stresses the 184
part that women play in group discussions. Al- 621
though their position may appear to be periph- 562
eral, neither he nor Anne Putnam underestimates the weight they carry in any discussion,

[P. 245-D]

[P.246-A]

184 ostensibly between the group of males sitting
621 together around a campfire. The net-hunting
562 band, then, consists of men and women. There
is no hint of any opposition between the individual family and the band.

601 That there is virtually a total absence of any
data on kinship terminology is in itself significant. Apparently a classificatory system, if one exists, is in extremely simple form, reduced to generational levels (grandchildren and grandparents, children and parents, and siblings) for each sex. There is no evidence that special terms are used to distinguish between, say, a patrilineal and a matrilineal grandparent. Also, when referring to his wife's brother's child in KiNgwana, an Mbuti calls him, if he uses a term at all, *mutoto,* whereas an Ngwana uses the reciprocal term *muyomba.* But, more
551 frequently, the Mbuti use personal names, distinguished when there is possibility of confusion either by the addition of the name of the patrilineal grandfather (not the ancestor) or by the substitution of a name in another language.

551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both
Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with
[613] the same meaning. The occasional use of a
grandfather's name is another indication of the
[602] lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this
group, and an indication of the size of the
largest group to which they conceive of them-
[614] selves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor
names) exist, but these seem to have little
[103] social significance. Place names are used fre-
quently to differentiate one hunting band from
[101] another.

• 621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any
563 of the alien families that have attached them-
selves to a net-hunting band, so completely are
[832] they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication
would be open flirtation between members of
the opposite sex within a hunting band. And
621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat-
575 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious
562 association which unites the women of the band
182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage),
and at the same time acknowledges the common
values of both, so unites them as a single group
in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total
[186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits,
animals, villagers, and presumably of other
semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never
unifies the band in opposition to other hunting
bands or lineages.

[P.246-B]

## POLITICAL LIFE

The fact that authority is vested in the line- 184
age for the archers, and in the great hunters 554
among the net hunters, is mentioned above as
one of the major differences corresponding to
the difference in hunting technique. Also rela- [562]
tive to this difference is the greater emphasis
laid by Putnam on the participation of women
in public discussion among the net hunters. We 598
cannot go beyond this bare observation of fact, 621
however, as there is no recorded description of
authority in action beyond one or two isolated 627
records of conjugal disputes. From these it is evident how even a private dispute enlarges its bounds by being taken up by all within earshot (which means in effect all in the camp), until everyone is involved. If the dispute is settled before it reaches these proportions, it can be assumed that it is with the approval of the entire group, as they are all aware of it whether they

[P. 246-D]

[P.247-A]

578 621 627 [184] [554] have taken part or not. With Schebesta's archers it seems that the lineage elder is the final authority, below which rank the family heads.

554 555 562 Whereas the status of men is related to hunting ability and to proficiency in the arts of mime, dance, and song, the factors involved in determining the status of women are not clear. Fertility is probably one factor, and, almost certainly, ability as a singer another, for a good singer takes a leading part in the *elima* celebrations. 554 881 The *elima* itself may be connected with adult male status, since one of its main features is the battle between the young men seeking to gain admission to the *elima* hut and the women guarding it. Married men may and do take part in this battle, but there comes a point when a man has neither the incentive nor, possibly, the necessary stamina. Anne Putnam writes of one elderly Mbuti, still active as a hunter, who was seen to cry during an *elima* festival. In response to a question he answered: "I fought my way into many an Alima hut when I was younger. Now I have no desires. It saddens me" (Putnam, 1954, 218). [558] A young man who does not take part in the *elima* is a subject for ridicule.

[P.251-C]

general acceptance of villager superiority among P
the Mbuti, although some individuals may 582
rarely seek to increase their status by emulating 186
their villager neighbors. From general observation I would say that the hunting band tolerates an occasional marriage to a villager because of its economic and political advantages, to which they are very alive and of which they take full
advantage when it suits them. They receive P
little payment for the girl they give (a fraction 2
of what the villager would give another vil- [583]
lager), but they consider that they then have a [439]
villager they can well and truly "eat."

### Ceremonial Attendant on Birth, Initiation, Marriage, and Death

Z
All the areas of contact between the Mbuti 563
and their villager neighbors so far mentioned 177
have been in or near the village. This point is P
of no small importance. The Pygmies always 177
make the move, make contact or break it, and 62 •
they take care that, apart from occasional visits 361
from villager individuals to their hunting camp, all contact takes place in the village. Also, the areas of contact so far described could all be explained away at a more or less superficial level. The degree to which trade and adoption of villager magical practices and beliefs actually affect the forest life of the Mbuti is bound to vary from band to band. But among the Epulu net hunters, at least, the points of contact described above have not affected their nomadic way of life unduly.

[P.255-A]
P turn was free to return to his nomadic existence.
Z We can suppose that the present relationship
17 between the villagers and the Mbuti originated
439 in this way and not in economic dependence or
physical subjugation. Whereas it was once a
clear patron-client relationship, it now seems to
have no such clear basis, either economic or
political.

P There is, among both the archer and the net-hunter
439 Mbuti, a trade relationship with the
184 villagers, but this now appears to be economically
artificial rather than necessary. Particularly
among the net hunters, who are more
nomadic than the archers, this trade relationship
is little more than one of mutual
P convenience. By itself, trade does not provide a
Z sufficiently stable basis for Pygmy-villager
177 interaction. The spasmodic nature of contact
648 between the two peoples complicates the issue
P further. Also, because of their nomadic existence
[B21] and the loose structure of band composition,
any Pygmy net hunter establishes relationships
with villagers in different villages,
quite possibly of different tribes. It seems that
greater stability is precisely one objective that
Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi* achieves, for
this festival is common to the majority of the
tribes in the area.

[P. 255-C]

shows the extent to which these particular 000
Mbuti preserve their "in-group" feeling.

A Pygmy net-hunting band is powerfully P
integrated yet fluid, and its contact with alien 621
societies is necessarily unformalized. Less well- 648
knit bands, such as may be found among the 171
archers described by Schebesta, may find it [184]
possible to enter into some kind of symbiotic Z
relationship with the villagers, but not so an [563]
active, nomadic, net-hunting band. Some kind
of relationship must be established because of
the inevitability of contact. As the smaller,
more powerfully integrated group, the Pygmies
must make the move to fit into the larger, looser
group. But there is no question of absorption;
the smaller group preserves its identity. The
*nkumbi*, and participation in or adoption of
other villager ceremonies, provide the Mbuti
with an opportunity both for establishing a
place in villager society and for asserting their
independent set of values by opposition. The P
antagonism that remains and is even heightened Z
by this opposition is smoothed over to some [439]
extent by the secondary mechanism by which
the two groups attempt to express their relationship- mutal trade

tionship—mutual trade. Trade may be an P 621 initial step in the direction of the symbiosis 648 described by Schebesta (1941, 263) for the 177 archers and their Lese neighbors. Joint partici- P pation in the *nkumbi* indicates no more than a 2 willingness on both sides to acknowledge an [881] unavoidable relationship based, as much as anything, on mere territorial propinquity.

What at first appears to be a conformity by P the Mbuti to villager custom now appears as a 177 superficial conformity at best and one that 18 barely conceals a detachment of two ways of life. By his participation in the *nkumbi*, and, we may suspect, in other villager institutions, the Mbuti shows his willingness to accept an outwardly subordinate position in villager society. This acceptance is partly responsible for the popular notion that the relationship is one of master-servant or patron-client. His rejection of the inner significance of the ceremonial shows not only a superficiality in the process of acculturation and assimilation but a conscious effort on the part of the Pygmy to keep his two worlds apart—the sacred world of the forest, with one set of values, and the profane world of the villager, invader of the forest, with another set of values. The Epulu Mbuti, at least, have

[P. 255-D]

533 tion. Once in the village, however, forest values
177 are cast off. Interpersonal relationships become
178 looser; the hunting band as such disintegrates
into so many individual families; forest norms
18 of behavior are cast to the winds; forest song is
[621] abandoned. Drum-dance replaces forest music entirely. This is the type of dance and music described by Schebesta (1941, 245). It is never heard in a forest hunting camp among the net hunters, only in the neighborhood of the village. It seems that the Mbuti regard the village primarily as a place for eating, drinking, and making merry, free from the rigors, however pleasurable, of forest life. These rigors demand periods of relaxation. I have suggested that the honey season was once a major holiday season for the Mbuti but that visits to the village are now taking its place.

177 Through their relationship with the villagers,
18 the Mbuti find an opportunity for relaxation,
an excursion into the profane world, a period of
533 license which ends, however, in a re-alignment and re-affirmation of the values of their own sacred world of the forest, all quite dramatically seen in the way in which a visit to the vil-

[P. 259-B]

## PLATE 29[1]

361 
### A Hunting Camp, Epulu District, Central Ituri

184 a. A hunting camp is always near a stream, usually in a natural clearing. A small archer
571 camp is often circular, but larger camps, such as those of the net hunters or of archers during
communal hunts, are more often irregular, reflecting not clan or lineage divisions so much as personal preferences, friendships, and hostilities that have little to do with kinship considerations.

621 b. A family group, such as this considered itself to be, may well consist, as this does, of
602 people linked not only by affinal connections but by the strongest bonds of friendship. The
887 elder in the center is a widower, living with the hunter to his right, whose child he holds.
Their relationship is that of distant affines, as is the elder's relationship with the other hunter, to his left (with wife and child) with whom he also sometimes lived. He thus formed a link between these two families, forming an effective subunit within the camp.

[1] /Plate 29 appears on page 291--Analyst/

[P. 290]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 621
602
887
142
302

/Plate 29-B/

/Caption appears on p.290/

[P. 291-B]

2: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

● 621

[For general discussions of "authority" in Mbuti society, see category 554.]

2: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361
221
621

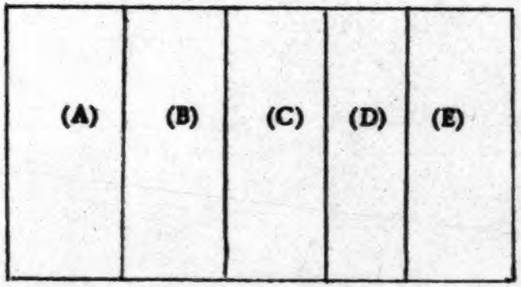
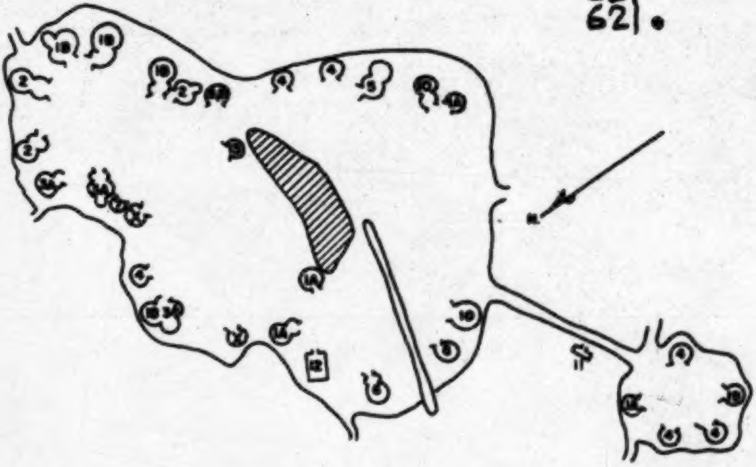


Chart of Positions of End Chart 1 (Plan 11).
[ facing End Chart 1]

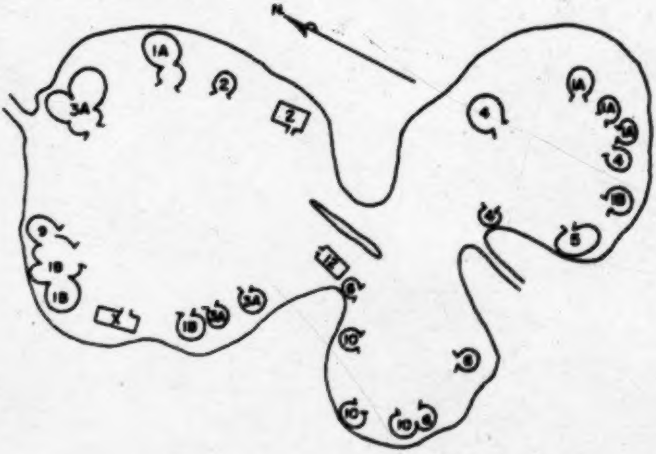
**PLAN II**

361
221
621

**IIA**
**AUGUST 1957**


1B
1B
2
1B
2
2
4
4
5
1A
1A
2A
4
1B
3A
12
1A
10
5
6
4
4
4
N

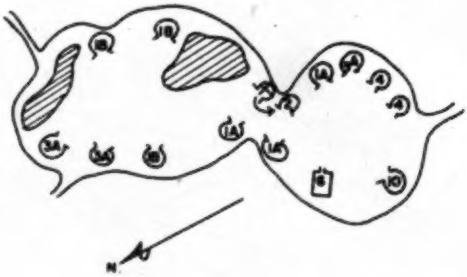
**IIB**
**NOV./DECEMBER 1957**


N
1A
2
3A
2
4
1A
1A
4
1B
6
5
9
1B
1B
X
1B
3A
3A
12
6
10
8
10
10
6

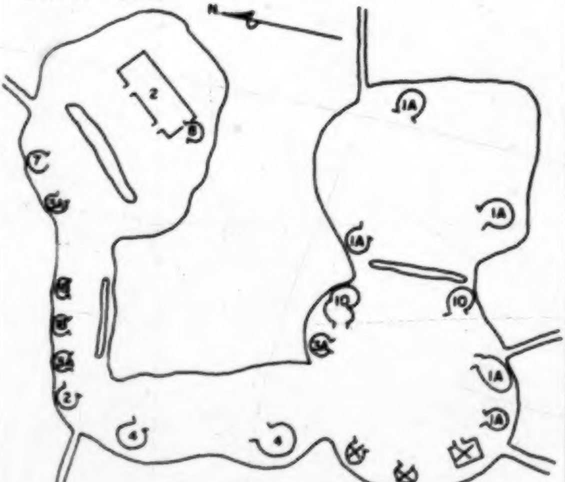
[End Chart 1,(A)]

11C
FEBUARY 1958

361
221
621


1B
1B
1A
3A
4
4
3A
3A
1B
1A
1B
8
1C
N

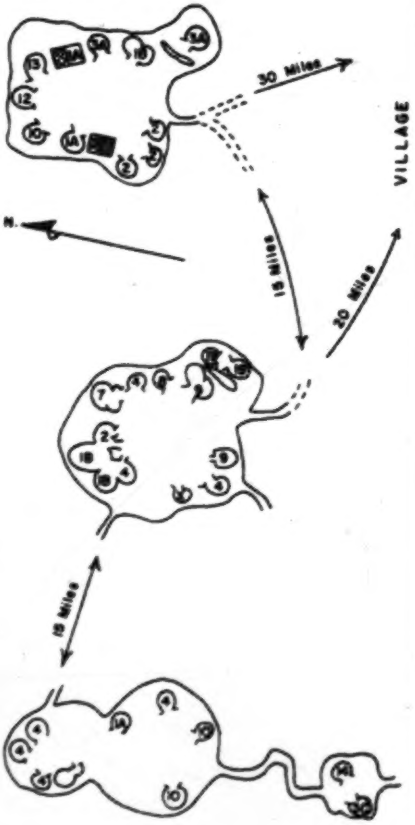
11D
MARCH 1958


N
2
8
7
3A
1A
1A
1A
1C
1C
3A
1A
1A
2
4
4

[End Chart 1,(B)]

11E
MAY-JUNE 1958
(HONEY SEASON)

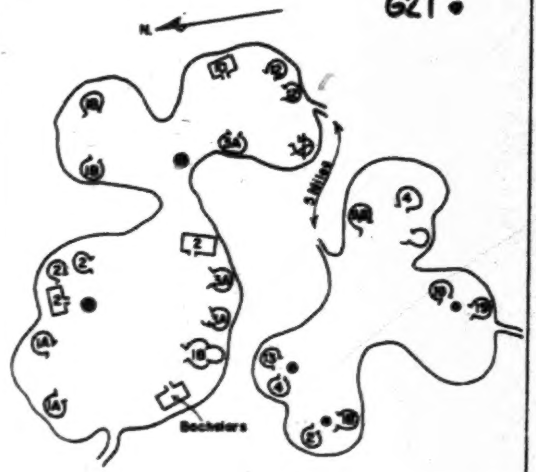
361
221
621


30 Miles
VILLAGE
N.
15 Miles
20 Miles
15 Miles

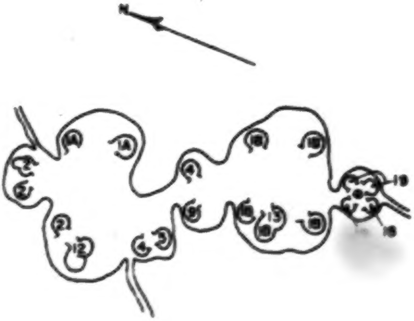
[End Chart 1,(C)]

11F
JULY 1958

361
221
621 ●


N.
3 Miles
2
Bachelors

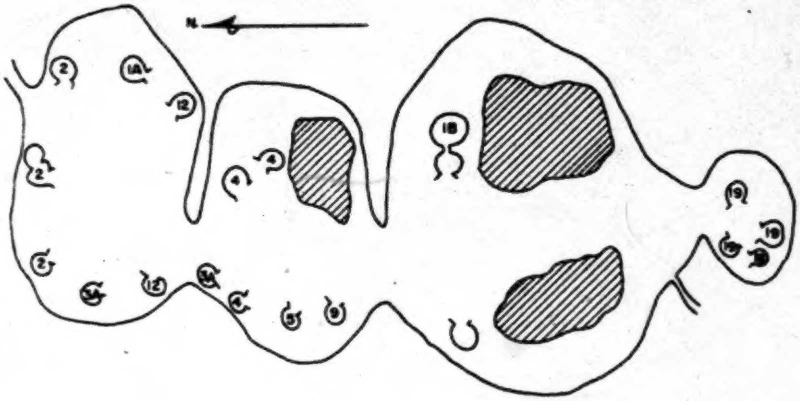
11G
AUGUST 1958



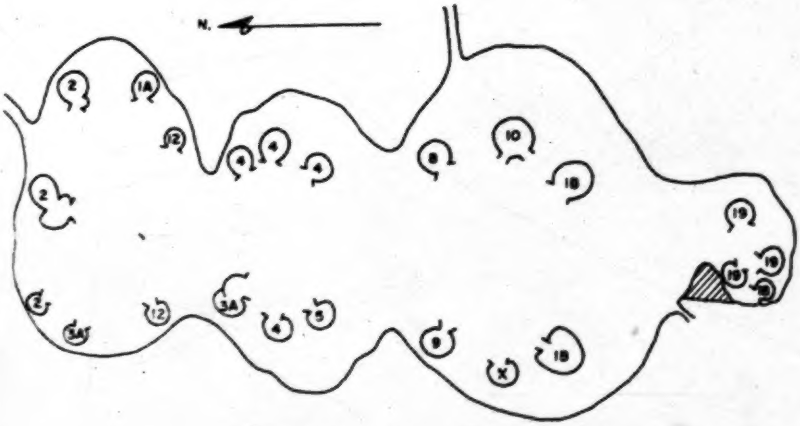
[End Chart 1, (D)]

11 H
**SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1958**

361
221
621


N.
2
1A
12
2
4
4
18
19
19
19
19
2
3A
12
3A
4
5
9

11 I
**NOVEMBER 1958**


N.
2
1A
12
4
4
4
8
10
18
2
19
19
19
19
2
3A
12
3A
4
5
9
X
18

[End Chart 1, (E)]

132 Where in the villages, and in the plantations that surround them,
the midday temperatures soar well into the nineties, and the ground
is covered with a dry, choking dust that quickly turns to mud, in the
shade of the forest the world is cool and fresh, with only rare places,
such as along river banks or at salt licks, where sunlight reaches the
136 ground without first being filtered through a leafy roof. Also from the
point of view of comfort, and of health, where village conditions lead
to gatherings of flies and mosquitoes, these disease bearers are seldom
if ever seen in the depths of the forest, except at such sites as are
[186] easily avoided. The Mbuti frequently compare their lot, in these respects,
with that of the villagers, who in turn grudgingly admit to
some advantages of forest life.

312 Another important contrast between forest and village life is in the water supply. The forest is interlaced with innumerable streams, any of which can be drunk from with impunity. A hunting camp is always located near a stream, but never stays in the one vicinity long enough to foul the water. A village remains in the same location, however, for three years or so, and the local water supply invariably becomes polluted. The villagers have some resistance to infection, but the Mbuti often have none and quickly become sick if they stay too long in a village.

136
262 But it is with regard to food even more than shelter or water that
the forest seems to favor the Mbuti. Throughout the year, without
fail, there is an abundant supply of game and of vegetable foods.
There are half a dozen different kinds of antelope that are particularly
abundant, apart from supplementary sources of meat such as birds,
[137] monkeys, chimpanzees, and divers grubs and insects. The forest also
supplies a number of edible roots, notably the sweet *itaba*, and many
different varieties of mushrooms, nuts, berries and fruits. All the latter
may vary in abundance the one from the other, according to the time
of year, but throughout the year at any one time there will be an ample
supply, in both quantity and variety.

262 The only truly seasonal food in the forest economy of the Mbuti
is honey, and it is of major importance in the diet. It is also of major
[621] importance as a focal point in the constant process of fission and
fusion that characterizes Mbuti society.

778 The apparent benevolence of the forest towards the Mbuti extends
still further. The materials for the making of shelter, clothing, and
all other necessary items of material culture are all to hand at a moment's
[313] notice. Firewood, equally, is everywhere in abundance. It is

## ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

121 There are two major difficulties facing any discussion of the Mbuti. One is the fact that while they are true hunters and gatherers, they are nonetheless associated in some way, and apparently closely so, with the surrounding forest cultivators. The inseparability of the two peoples makes it especially difficult to know where to begin, as the Mbuti are one thing in one context and a quite different thing in another context.

114 The other difficulty lies in the fact that previous sources have not
given us a clear idea of the structure of either group, Mbuti or villag-
ers, and have completely misled us as to the nature of the relationship
114 between the two. I have dealt somewhat with the latter difficulty
121 elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) and propose to deal with the former
difficulty by giving a brief sketch of the nature of Mbuti society that
will adequately provide a basis for a preliminary investigation of the
actual nature of the relationship between the Mbuti and the villag-
ers. Only then can we safely attempt to understand the nature of
Mbuti social structure, even in their forest society, as divorced as it
may seem to be from the village context.

161 It is impossible to give an accurate estimate of the population of the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, as there has been nothing approaching an efficient census. Owing to the mobility of the individual hunting bands, and the lack of co-operation offered by villagers whenever queries are made about the number of Mbuti they "own," we must regard with suspicion any figures based on a count of bands attached to villages and an average band population. From my own experience, and from discussion with missionaries and administrators who have attempted counts, one way or another, I would hazard a guess at somewhere around 40,000, with no evidence to show that the population is increasing, but certainly none to show that it is decreasing.

619 The total population may be divided, as we have seen, into groups
[224] that emphasize one hunting technology or another, the two main
groups being the archers and the net-hunters. The spear-hunters also
use bows and arrows for defense as well as for occasional individual
hunting. None of these groups can be said to have any political iden-
tity, however, any more than can the Mbuti totality, except in opposi-
tion to the villagers.

621 The only effective political unit is the band, which we have defined

as a unit of Mbuti hunters sharing and recognizing a common hunt- 621 • ing territory.[2] No matter what group the band falls under, the definition holds. The territory is clearly defined by natural boundaries, though the law of trespass depends somewhat on the location of the home band within its territory at the moment of trespass. The boundaries, though fixed, are under certain circumstances capable of penetration without causing offense.

The composition of the band is fluid, to say the least, and does not [611] follow any clear unilineal or cognatic descent system. Throughout the forest, the bands are in a constant state of fragmentation as well as in a constant process of fission and fusion. Members of any band are quite likely at any moment to leave and join another band, temporarily or permanently, for any one of a number of reasons. In-law visiting is common, and permanent attachments to the band are sometimes accomplished this way. But at the same time, with each successive, monthly change of site, the hunting camp also shows another stage in the over-all process of fission and fusion along recognizable lines of structural cleavage. At certain times of the year, different for net-hunters and archers, the band splits up into a number of smaller sub-bands, all still hunting within the same over-all territory, but as independent units.

It has generally been stated, sometimes citing the apparent lack of 621 an Mbuti language as an example, that the Mbuti are a people with- 177* out a culture of their own, adopting the culture of their villager neighbors just as they adopt their language. A superficial look at a hunting society, with its lack of easily recognizable social institutions, might seem to confirm that opinion. There is no chieftainship, no council [622] of elders, but sometimes an individual who assumes the villager title [623] of *sultani* or *capita*. There is no legal system supported by effective [69] or formal supernatural sanctions. There is an evident lack of any kin- [68] ship system except an apparently slavish imitation of the villager clan [613] and lineage system, whereby certain individuals related through the principle of patrilineal descent recognize a common ancestor and symbolize their unity by the respect of a common totem. Any attempt to integrate this system with other institutions, indigenous or adopted,

---

[2] Throughout, except where otherwise specified, I use the term "band" in this sense of a unit that is primarily territorial. It is essentially composed of peoples bound together by bonds other than lineage. Insofar as affines are an important part of any band, and affinal relationships as important in most respects as lineal relationships, the band [602] cannot even be defined as cognatic or bilateral without qualification stressing its ad-hoc nature.

• 621 falls unhappily apart however, and it looks indeed as if the Mbuti are
*177 in the process of adopting villager institutions wholesale, without
adopting the system that would relate them.

[881] Further evidence in favor of this interesting half-truth of Mbuti
dependence is plainly discernible in the adoption by the Mbuti of village ceremonials connected with *rites de passage*, in which they subject themselves completely to villager ritual authority. But again these adopted institutions seem to have little structural relationship to the Mbuti hunting life, divorced as it is from the village context. Once one grants that divorce, then one is left with an apparent vacuum, a lack of internal system that is almost anarchical. Yet there is no anarchy; law and order exist without the villager context as within, and without as in their villager institutions. In default of any clear exposition of internal system, however, it has been assumed by many that the actual situation is one of total Mbuti dependence upon the villagers.

222 The economy of the Mbuti is hunting and gathering, and they are
224 perfectly capable of independent subsistence. Hunger, in absence of
village food supplies, is due only to laziness. The alleged economic
224 dependence of the Mbuti will be discussed in the next chapter. Here
476 it is only necessary to stress the possibility of their actual indepen-
*[177] dence of the village, and point to a dependence upon each other, best
seen in the fact that all the hunting techniques involve some measure of co-operation between men, women and children. The net-hunt demands the greatest measure of co-operation; the little I was able to discover about spear-hunts indicates a preference for hunting parties of five or six men; and while archers can hunt successfully in threes, there are among the archers annual beat-hunts (*begbe*) which demand the same high degree of co-operation demanded by the net-hunt, involving the entire band. Some elementary principles of unity can be discerned, then, in these various hunting techniques, but they are not sufficient to fill the gap left by the absence of developed kinship or political systems.

621 In the hunting band, as we have seen, the population is somewhat
mercurial and composite. Only when the band fragments into smaller
units do we occasionally get a fragment that has some appearance of
being a kin group. System still eludes us. Nor do the *sultani* and *capita*
[622] offer any effective replacement for the missing political system. No
one individual is effectively a leader; issues are settled by common

discussion. The discussion is not entirely haphazard, but once again 621 •
the structural factor is elusive.

When first we look at the religious life of the Mbuti we feel the 771
pulse beating clearly. The *elima* and the *molimo* are outstandingly 796
evident as institutions connected with crisis, but the moment we try [881]
to analyze their function the beat becomes less distinct. Here the [765]
picture is again confused by the fact that the villagers have similar [177]*
names for ceremonies of their own that are alike enough to lead to the assumption that the Mbuti adopted these institutions into their own disorganized framework. Then the pulse stops altogether.

I suggested earlier (Turnbull, 1956) that part of the answer lay in 121
a vital opposition between the two worlds of the Mbuti, the forest and 177*
the village. Recognizing that opposition is no less a relationship than 621
any other form of relationship, we can at least theoretically separate the two worlds temporarily, if they are truly in opposition, and study them apart. Using this device we are free to look at the Mbuti in the village context almost as though this were their sole existence, and discern there what system we can. We are also free to examine the same people in the forest context, living in small nomadic hunting bands, virtually independent of the village world. But by looking at the village world first, when we turn to the forest world we shall be able to follow the Mbuti not only as they move from one hunting camp to another, but also when they abandon the forest for a brief spell in the village, seized by a whim, by the desire for relaxation, or by their taste for village foods, wine and tobacco. In this way we shall arrive at a better understanding of both worlds of the Mbuti, and of the actual relationship between them. We shall also, in the process, test our hypothesis of opposition, and, if it be proven, discover the elusive principle that binds together the otherwise apparently lawless, leaderless, un-kin-conscious forest society.

[P.30 is blank]

P

C the one time when, above all others, the villagers needed the help of
175 648 the Mbuti. And that was precisely the time when the Mbuti were
C least available, for this work[1] was least to their taste, and beyond a
248 certain point even the Mbuti cannot be bribed.

P [461] [464]

## THE NEED FOR CONTROL

C
622 In 1957, and again in 1958, Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe found
648 himself in difficulty over his cotton harvest. Of all the tribal chiefs in
248 the Ituri, Kachui was one of the most powerful and one of the most
464 influential. He had the advantage of a government-supported police
P force at his disposal, but on both occasions when I was at Bafwakoa
464 at the time of cotton harvest he was without his usual retinue of
● 621 Mbuti parasites. He had his sons deployed nearly to the Epulu to the
648 east, and halfway to Wamba to the north, in an effort to learn the
whereabouts of "his" Mbuti, but to no avail. He even used me in the
C [123] hope that I would be able to discover at least one hunting camp, and I
was led to where a few Mbuti maintained a plantation camp, living
in the shade of the forest but acting as guards against raids on the
plantation by monkeys, baboon and elephant, on the strict understanding
that they were not used for work in the cotton fields. Although
I was known there, and would normally have been taken
straight to the hunting camp, all knowledge of the whereabouts of
their fellows was denied. It may indeed have been that the band had
broken up and gone in different directions to join neighboring bands
that were less pressed, or it may simply have gone far off into the
depths of the forest where it could never be found. None of Chief
Kachui's threats or exhortations was of the least avail.

C At the same time, Chief Kayumba of the Mbo, just across the
622 Ituri River, was having the same trouble, and I saw some seven recently
648 deserted village camps with not a single Mbuti to be found.
248 Kayumba did not conceal the fact that he had constant difficulty of
464 this kind, never being able to rely on the Mbuti to be on hand when
P he wanted them, and at other times being surrounded and consumed
464 by them. Hamadi, one of the two major Bira chiefs, and probably
648 the most unscrupulous, generally maintained a retinue of Mbuti in
village camps, but as far as I could assess it was a floating population
that seldom worked on the plantations. Chief Lupao of the Lesé at
Nduye complained of being without Mbuti when he needed them,
and this was true on the one occasion when I was at Nduye at the

[1] [i.e., harvesting cotton -- Analyst]

P

the position is by no means always popular, and there are instances 622
of dispute as to who should fill a vacant position as *capita*. Usually 554
it is an Mbuti who has a highly developed taste for village foods, 177*
tobacco, wine and hemp. Most frequently he fills a dual role, also P
being the hunting band's clown, an important figure in the settling [629]
of internal disputes, again essentially a scapegoat. He will convey to
the hunting band the wishes of the villagers, and discuss with the
band the questions of food exchange or supply of labor. Among the P
net-hunters this is about as far as he will go, any decisions after that [184]
being taken by group discussion. Among the archers, however, the
*capita* may go further, translating the villagers' demands into more
practical terms, and suggesting how the band can best effect a compromise.
He may even allocate specific tasks to specific individuals
or families, but if he is heeded it is with notably bad grace, and again
only because those concerned deem it expedient. The Mbuti headman
has absolutely no authority in the band, even in its village context. P

The greater importance of the *capita* among the archers is related 622
to the fact that, unlike the net-hunters, the archer bands are for the 554
most part of the year fragmented into smaller sections, each virtually 621 •
independent of the other. There is, then, a greater need to co-ordinate 184
their response to village demands, as the villagers take advantage of
the fragmentation by attempting to exploit each section simultaneously.
Among the net-hunters, whose bands are much more closely
knit, and hunt throughout most of the year as large co-operative units,
the only function the *capita* serves, from the point of view of the P
band, is as an intermediary, little more than a message bearer. Certain [648]
*capita*, however, among both archers and net-hunters, acquire great
renown among their fellow Mbuti by the success with which they
cheat the villagers. This indeed is the only way in which the *capita*,
as such, can acquire any prestige at all among his own people.

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The major inconsistency of the system lies in the fact that it conflicts 648
directly with a much more subtle means by which the villagers 613
seek to gain control over the Mbuti. Being familiar only with tribal 627
systems of a formal nature, whose organization rests upon the principle [829]
of patrilineal descent, the villagers can only conceive of Mbuti P
society in the same way. Not finding a chief or headman, they impose 622
one, likening a hunting band to a village. They use him in much the 648
same way they would use their own headmen. But the imposition of

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622 this institution implies also the imposition of the principle of the
613 patrilineal, patrilocal unit. Perhaps at one time it was; it now certainly is not.[1]
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622 Finding political relations difficult to maintain and enforce, and
C although they still continue to attempt to deal with bands as one
648 village would deal with another, through the *capita*, the villagers then
614 look to interpersonal relationships as a means of acquiring their ends.
[829] They impose the village kinship system upon the Mbuti, keeping as
[571] accurate an account of the growth of an Mbuti family as they do of
P their own, and they ally the resultant Mbuti "clans" to village clans.
648 It is easy enough to visualize the origins of the system, when hunting
614 621 bands found they had to side with villages, the villagers mistaking
*177 (or perhaps correctly taking) the bands for unilineal-descent groups.
[174] In this way the relationship between the two groups would be hereditary and self-perpetuating. But the band today is not a unilineal-descent group, and may be comprised of a score or more lineages. Thus a village that is a kinship unit, recognizing the senior male-lineage representative as its headman, finds itself in relationship with a band under a *capita* who may only be remotely related to other male members of the band, by affinal or consanguineal ties. The band itself, consisting of different clans, evidently owes its allegiance, under the village system, to different villages.

On the one hand, the village claims to "own" the band, recognizing the *capita* as its representative. On the other hand, as a lineal unit the village claims a hereditary relationship with another lineal unit, and de facto dissociates itself, perhaps with the major portion of the band, and involves itself in politico-economic difficulties with the neighboring villages who may claim the other portions of that band.

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[829] The villagers claim to be saviors of the Mbuti, to have freed them from the necessity of living in the forest like animals, and they justify their claim to ownership in this way. If the Mbuti band were indeed a stable, localized patrilineal unit, then some effective basis for a relationship between the two groups along these lines might persist; but given the cognatic and fluid nature of the contemporary band, the notion of hereditary ownership seldom tallies with effective economic relationships. Consequently there are continuous disputes be-

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[1] This is not to say that one could not find a band that, at one time of the year or another, is not in effect a patrilineage. It is, rather, to say that lineality would in such a case not be the essence of band structure, but incidental.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 648 614

tween villagers arising out of the migratory tendencies of "their" Mbuti. P 648 614 621• 177*

The effective system is that each band maintains an exchange relationship with the village or villages closest to its hunting territory, P and effectively the relationship is an exchange not between band and village, except as territorial units only, but between nuclear families C 439 571 or mere individuals. If the exchange relationship follows descent lines, [594] it is no more than incidental. From the Mbuti point of view, in any case, it makes not the slightest difference. All villagers are animals to be "eaten" without discrimination. P [829] It only makes a difference from the villager point of view, the question of compensation of the rightful "owner" continually arising.

Leaving the theoretical system for the moment, and looking at the effective system of exchange, we find that the tendency to think of the relationship as hereditary, on the part of the villagers, is irrepressible. P 571 177* As far as the Mbuti are concerned, they pick and choose. As a child an Mbuti may grow accustomed to a number of "owners," as his parents move from band to band, or village to village. C 571 177 608 When he is old enough to hunt he will choose whichever "owner" happens to be convenient at the time, but if he does not get the treatment he expects, he will without hesitation get himself "adopted" by another villager, even in the same village. The only consideration countenanced by the Mbuti is their own convenience.

A wise villager will treat his Mbuti well, and in return will be able to get the minimum service from them without too much difficulty, and there are instances where such relationship has apparently persisted over several generations (see Table 1). But the contemporary situation militates against persistence. For instance, among the Epulu net-hunters one of the larger "clan" units that made up the total composition of the band was the Puemi clan. P [814] In its entirety it was claimed by a prominent Bira named Ngoma. But Ngoma had to spend most of his time in Mambasa, the administrative post some C [428] fifty miles from his village, so in his absence his Mbuti were divided, according to the Bira system of inheritance, between his two brothers, Isa and Takalili. But the system did not specify where the dividing line should be drawn, and in any case the Puemi had moved a number of miles in the opposite direction and were on the other side of the Epulu River, in the territory of Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe. There they formed allegiances to local villagers, ignored the demands of Isa and Takalili to return to hunt for them, saying that they were

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 571 *177 C 571 177 608 C [554]

still Ngoma's Mbuti. Ngoma himself said he had no objections to the Puemi, or any other of his Mbuti, hunting for other villagers while he was away, so long as they still acknowledged him as their *kpara*, or owner. He was wealthy enough to have no economic need of the Mbuti, but he was greatly concerned with his status, which was, he said, determined largely by the number of Mbuti who called him *kpara*. Certainly status was an important consideration for the villagers, and ownership, effective or otherwise, of a large number of Mbuti would add to it, but there were few who could afford to ignore the economic aspect of the relationship as could Ngoma.

C 608 571 177 428 P 571 *177

The situation then becomes seriously complicated for the field worker who is trying to disentangle the system of ownership. Any villager will claim hereditary rights over even the most recent newcomer. But he will also claim rights over the Mbuti who have left him, and in some instances over those that he would have inherited from his father had they not left his father. As hereditary ownership can be transferred by adoption with compensation (a sum in cash or goats, and a promise of a share of any meat that falls into the net of the Mbuti transferred, or of that of his senior male descendants) and as the "clan" names also sometimes become adopted in this way, any attempt to discover a system of hereditary ownership becomes doubly hazardous, if indeed such a system exists except in theory.

P 571 *177 C 571 177 608 P [614] [621] •

The Epulu situation is perhaps more complicated than others because most of the Mbuti in that band are claimed by Bira villagers, whereas the band itself is in Ndaka territory and has formed effective links with both Ndaka and Bira villagers, offering forest foodstuffs to the local villagers, who are mostly Ndaka, and performing some service for their more remote Bira owners. In this way, of course, they maintain two sources of supply of village goods. But the actual distribution of the clans that contributed to the composition of the Epulu band, as shown in Table 2,[1] indicates how ineffective the principle of hereditary ownership is, in fact. The same kind of picture can be drawn for most net-hunting bands, and when we come to consider the forest world, among both net-hunters and archers we shall find a situation that militates against any effective stable and durable exchange relationships between Mbuti and villagers, particularly if based on the principle of unilineal descent.

The myth of hereditary ownership, then, does not seem to provide a much more effective means of control for the villagers than does the creation of mythical but comparable political systems. But it is not totally ineffective.

[1] [see page 323 -- Analyst]

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rate. I have known it to happen for Mbuti youngsters to go through 608
the entire village marriage ceremony simply for the sake of the feast- 582
ing, considering their relationship as no more than a mild flirtation. 583 571
In either case the premature separation involves their respective P 177*
*kpara* in restitution proceedings, which even if successful will still 582
leave a net loss to the extent, at least, of a feast that may have in- 571
volved a hundred or more Mbuti and villagers for up to three days. 581

This, together with the fact that a union that is considered as incestuous by the one group is not necessarily considered incestuous by the other, is sufficient to indicate the incompatibility of the two systems, which is only heightened if we attempt to correlate either kinship system, that of the villagers or that of the Mbuti, with the economic exchange system.

By extending the parallel still further, however, the villagers make C
their final attempt to gain some effective measure of control over the 563
Mbuti and resolve the inherent conflicts through supernatural sanc- 571
tions. And once again they are thwarted by a number of factors, one 626
being that the Mbuti continue to adopt the outer form of the village P 177*
customs with the utmost readiness, but do not adopt the system. 571
Whereas, for the villagers, the total social structure is an integrated 621
whole consisting of a number of institutions interrelated in a definite manner, for the Mbuti, in the village context, the same institutions are adopted but by no means interrelated in the same manner. The relationship between kinship and leadership, as we have seen, does not apply to the Mbuti. Their *capita* is elected rather than descended, and his whole meaning and purpose are correspondingly different. The *capita* has absolutely nothing to do, among the Mbuti, with the maintenance of law and order, and in no way symbolizes the common origin of the male members of the band.

So also, for the Mbuti, is the economic exchange system unrelated P 439
to either the kinship or the political systems in the village context. 571
The exchange relationships may run directly counter to all those prescribed by the various political and kinship institutions the Mbuti have equally adopted.

Their apparent readiness to participate in village institutions, if not C 563
in the system, however, leaves the Mbuti open to yet another line 571
of attack. Unable to enforce any of the control that would normally 626
derive from the adoption of their socio-politico-economic institu- P 177*
tions, the villagers open their magico-religious institutions to the 571
Mbuti, and thus seek to place them under supernatural control—the 621

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[789]
[769]

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881 Of all the various *rites de passage* practiced by the villagers, and to
which they are forced to introduce the Mbuti, none probably is so
C important as the *nkumbi* initiation of the boys into manhood. Among
[191] the Bantu tribes this is practiced with circumcision, among the
Sudanic it is without circumcision, though there is a tendency among
some Sudanic tribes situated close to the Bantu, such as the Lesé
bordering on the Bira, to adopt the custom, one village at a time.

The major purpose of the *nkumbi*, as stated by the tribes that practice it (I refer mainly to the Forest Bira here), is to fit the youths as men, to make them men in the eyes of the ancestors. A boy who does not undergo the *nkumbi* is denied access to the ancestors after death, and during his life has the status of a child. Boys between the ages of eight and twelve, generally between nine and eleven, are eligible for the ceremony, which now takes place once every three years and lasts for two or more months. The traditional time element has been completely upset by the administration, which, together with the missionaries, has tried to discourage the whole institution. But the *nkumbi* initiation has remained as the only way to achieve adult status within the tribe. I have seen an entire *nkumbi* ceremony, including circumcision, held for a boy who died just prior to being initiated.

C Effectively the *nkumbi* also unites a few neighboring villages as a
881 single political unit, and affords an opportunity though the system
628 of *karé* blood brotherhood, of cementing specific political bonds. It
182 also effectively unites those tribes who practice circumcision in opposition
[608] to those who do not practice it, and it determines certain
lines of marriage prohibition.

C One such line, of course, divides the circumcised from the uncircumcised,
881 and theoretically marriage between a Bira and a Lesé would
608 be unthinkable. The only cases known to me allegedly happened during
582 war, captive women being taken as wives. But equally theoretically
P these prohibitions should apply to the Mbuti who, according to the
881 practice of their *kpara*, not having any of their own, either do or do
608 not suffer circumcision at village hands. As we shall see, however,
582 forest territorial organization is no respecter of village tribalism, and
*177 band composition is fluid, to say the least. Consequently, in any one
[621] band one can by no means be sure that all the men are circumcised,
and the question is never raised. Further than that, there is no objection
to marriage, among the Mbuti, between a family whose *kpara*
circumcises and one whose *kpara* does not. Such marriages would cer-

P It is also possible to see Mbuti scrounging food from villagers
685 other than their own *kpara* and, when not successful, simply stealing
648 what they want. If they are caught they are scolded by their *kpara*
571 121 and that is generally all. If more fuss is made than that, all the Mbuti
C are likely to pack up and return to the forest within hours. But whatever
648 Mbuti may be seen engaged in whatever activity, they can be
571 seen only as individuals in relationship to a particular villager at that
particular moment, unrelated to other villagers and other Mbuti, unless
P they are included in the same activity. Only in the village camp
[361] of the Mbuti, usually at the edge of the plantation, do they form a
● [621] society, but the interpersonal relationships observable even in a village
camp bear little resemblance to relationships in the more strictly
village context.

P The situation becomes more understandable in light of the expressed
829 Mbuti attitude to their own place in the village world. They
648 refer to the village as being a place for good hunting and good eating.
571 Hunting requires cunning, and particularly when dealing with a
"tricky" animal such as the villager, say the Mbuti. The word for
"trickery" means more than "clever," it has connotations of supernatural
power. So the Mbuti, when hunting in the village, use appropriate
P tactics, just as they do in the forest. Carrying wood and
[224] fetching water, building houses and pounding manioc, are all part
of those tactics, and may perhaps be likened to the net with which
the Mbuti trap the forest animals.

This Mbuti attitude to the relationship not only fits with the theory
that there is, in effect, no necessary economic interdependence,
but it also fits well with the suggestion of *apparent* structural incompatibility.
Mbuti talk of "eating" the villagers, and indeed the
villagers also talk, with some asperity, of being eaten. In Mbuti
thought, however, it is rather more literal than it may seem, for the
P villagers are not only referred to as animals, a common term of abuse,
[825] but they are considered as animals. And when one eats an animal one
merely consumes its substance, one does not thereby assume its form
or its pattern of behavior.

C Even supposing that there was a necessary economic interdependence,
439 the daily life of the village in no way reveals any sense of economic
648 urgency. Even in times of crisis, such as the cotton harvest,
121 powerful chiefs like Kachui may evidently find themselves deserted
by the Mbuti and forced to make out on their own. But if there were
a true economic dependence, then there would have to be a workable
economic system, with an associated system of social control; and

we have already seen that in place of system and control there is, C 439
apparently, only flux and instability that militate *against* system and 648
control. 121

By flux I refer to the fact that the Mbuti appear to adopt village P
institutions but not the village system of interrelationships. In this 177*
way there is a disconnectedness in the village context of the Mbuti 182
that enables both sides to refer to whichever institution is convenient 608
at the moment to establish a relationship of the moment. Thus an C
Mbuti may be asked to help one villager on the ground of their *karé* 648
relationship, and expected by another to help because of the hereditary 608
*kpara* relationship. Considerations of simple economic exchange P C
between the same Mbuti and still other villagers may override either [571]
of the above considerations at another moment. Thus the Mbuti has a number of possible ways in which he can link himself with the village and the villagers, at different and distinct times. The converse also applies, and if a villager finds his hereditary claims ineffective he may call on other Mbuti because of the *karé* relationship, and so
forth. P

In view of the nomadic nature of the hunting band and, as we 621 •
shall see, of its composition, this "system" of flux is the only one 182
that could possibly pertain. But it leads inevitably to instability because 177*
of the consequent lack of any one system of control. In the 648
same way that the Mbuti can hop from one conflicting set of relationships 121
to another, so he can hop from one system of control to C
another. By Mbuti rejection of the total village system and by what 121
proves to be an opposition of a totally different set of values, the 648
villager ultimately is denied virtually all control, and the Mbuti similarly is denied any absolute security in his relationships with the
villagers. C

*However, the loss of control is more serious to the villagers than* 648
is the loss of security to the Mbuti, and it is also more complete, for 439
the villagers are themselves bound by the supernatural sanctions 121
through which they vainly attempt to impose control upon the [626]
Mbuti. The whole situation is incompatible with the notion of economic P
interdependence, yet there is no denying the actual relationship 439
between the two groups of people. Nor can one deny that within 648
a framework of flux and instability, the relationship is persistent, so 182
there must be some system. If that system is so evidently unrelated to 121
economic factors, we have to look elsewhere for its focal point.

There are not all that many basic relationships that can exist be-

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behind, but in the village world they are dormant, and do not come 177*
into play until the two worlds begin to impinge upon each other. 182

Thus the economic, kinship and political relationships that bind P
the Mbuti together as a society in the forest do not pertain in the 177*
village, and consequently the society disintegrates as such. An example 182
can be had by comparing plans of the forest hunting camps with 621 •
plans of the village camps over the same period (see Plan 2). It will
be seen that there is virtually no correspondence, and that while each
successive forest camp (approximately one a month) shows a significant
change in structure related to the constant process of fission and
fusion and of fragmentation, the village camps show no such pattern.
At first they seem much more stable, but that is due at least in part
to the fact that the actual camp is more permanent in nature, being
occupied for much shorter periods of time. Also, such camps are
sometimes built in imitation of the real villages, the houses being
made smaller, though of the same semi-permanent mud and wattle
construction. It is only the physical disposition that remains constant,
however, and that only for as long as the physical camp remains
unchanged. This may be for as long as a year or more. During that
time the composition of the village camp is constantly changing, according
to no discernible pattern, and certainly none related to the
composition of the forest camp.

The Mbuti living in a village camp can no longer be considered as
a band. Indeed, there are times when the village camp may be fully
occupied, as if by a band, but in fact by Mbuti who have nothing
more immediately in common than their intent to "eat" those particular P
villagers. Even considerations of kinship and of age break 177*
down, though nuclear families tend to continue to live together. A 182
nuclear family will not co-operate within itself in the same way, however, 621
*as it would* in a hunting camp; nor, most certainly, will it cooperate 593
with other nuclear families. There is not even the necessity 594
for a wife to cook her husband a meal, as he can always scrounge one
from a villager. Whether he does so or not is purely a domestic issue P
between himself and his family and, as seen, because of the flux that C
pertains, different members of the same family could choose to establish [608]
village relationships, each by invoking a different context— [571]
the one *karé*, the other *kpara*, another economic exchange—so even
three brothers technically "owned" by the same villager could find
themselves attached to three different villagers, possibly living in
three different houses (when in the village, the Mbuti sometimes

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

*177 sleep in the *baraza* of the villagers rather than in the village camp).
182 The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may
● 621 well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband
593 594 and visit her own *kpara* in another village.

P C Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in
[608] the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find them-
[571] selves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find them-
P selves eating together on the same *baraza*, helping to build the same
182 house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that
621 pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where,
561 for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and
462 where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

P It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the
648 village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp
621 show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same
186 hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village
P relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with
648 concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats
166 and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just
C established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing
563 they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much
[431] good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

P The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is fre-
533 quently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing
186 in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the
621 lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

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a few yards away, and some village camps, depending upon the circumstances, 186
are actually built still in the shade of the forest, out of 621 •
sight of the village and its plantations.

But granted this separation of the two worlds, and the fact that P C
when the band (or part of it) comes to the village it disintegrates as 121
such, and if we accept the lack of any economic necessity or political 648
force by which we could explain the relationship, we still have to answer the question as to why a relationship exists and what its true nature is.

This can best be answered after we have seen the nature of the C 648
forest world, but it can already be seen that the meeting of the two 121
peoples is somewhat like the meeting of two polar opposites that are 177
irresistibly drawn together. And indeed, such magnetic links between P
opposites are the only true ones we have found. The point at which 648
the forest and the village truly meet, the focal point of the relationship 177 *
between the two peoples, is not economic or political, but religious. 121
The nature of the meeting is one of opposition, and this opposition is most clearly expressed in the mutually antagonistic systems of values. Although we have only concerned ourselves with the village world to this point, we have already seen the strength of the village fear of the forest, resulting in their unwillingness to enter it
and their consequent "dependence" upon the Mbuti for necessary P
forest products. This fear is expressed in religious terms by reference C
to the hostile forest spirits, and the general antagonism of the forest [771]
to the village world, witnessed by its reluctance to support village
crops. Insofar as the villagers recognize the Mbuti as a forest people C [776]
they believe them to be somehow aligned with the forest spirits, and
therefore to be placated. That does not prevent the villagers from C [626]
*attempting, while placating, to extend some form of control over the* Mbuti. Indeed they seem far more concerned about this than they are about the small amount of meat or labor they manage to extract from the Mbuti (see Table 3 for an example of "economic" exchange).

The Mbuti most nearly fall under village control through their own fear of the village (which by its very nature is not only not "of the forest" but is actively hostile to the forest), and through their fear of the powers the villagers claim to have over the supernatural, by witchcraft and sorcery. Quite apart from the historic genesis of the Mbuti/Villager relationship, the very antagonism of their ways of life, together with their territorial propinquity, would be enough to de-

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648 mand that they come to some kind of terms and establish some kind
121 of mechanism for dealing with the threat that each feels.
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P We have seen how the villagers attempt to deal with the situation
648 by asserting control over the Mbuti through the adoption of the
121 Mbuti into the village social system, thus placing them under the supernatural
*177 sanctions of village society. We have also seen that the Mbuti evade such control, though we have not exactly seen how, for at the moment the success of their evasion seems to lie in the rejection of system, in a flux and instability that alone would lead to
P chaos. In examining the forest society of the Mbuti now, however,
648 we shall see how this flux and apparent instability is in fact a structural
• 621 factor, and that while the villagers are constantly attempting
121 to absorb the Mbuti into their village social system, the Mbuti have evolved a social system of their own which, while still permitting their traditional hunting and gathering existence, takes this new village factor into consideration and, so to speak, by opposing, ends it. For the Mbuti forest system seems almost expressly designed to run counter to the village system, and, by opposing it at every point of possible structural contact, it makes any structural relationship except one of opposition quite impossible.

P Thus in examining the forest system of the Mbuti we have to remember
648 that the same institution may well have a double function;
621 the one of maintaining cohesion with the forest world, the other of
121 maintaining opposition with the world outside. And insofar as the
178 invasion of the village tribes is relatively recent, this is a system that is still evolving. All the more so because the successive waves of the invasion, followed by the advent of the Arab slave traders and finally by the arrival of the Belgians, have all wrought sudden and drastic changes in the nature of village life and on the village settlement pattern. *There may indeed be some institutions that are newly* evolved and the purpose of which is directed primarily at maintaining the relationship of opposition between forest and village. Others are in the process of adaptation, notably the Mbuti *molimo*, where the forest system of values has its deepest roots and where, consequently, their opposition to village values must be most forcefully expressed. And some institutions appear to be in a state of atrophy.

P We are, then, very clearly going to be studying a society in the
178 process of change. The structure that will emerge, involving a disconcerting
121 lack of emphasis on kinship, is not necessarily or even probably characteristic of hunting and gathering societies, and should cer-

[P.93]

CHAPTER 8

# The Band

## TERRITORY

Before we can begin to understand what the Mbuti band is, we 621
have to understand the notion of territory, which is effectively the 423
only concept through which the band can be defined. Insofar as the 121
band is the largest effective political unit, so the widest territorial 131
boundaries that are recognized are those separating each band from
the others. As will be seen, there is a current tendency for all Mbuti
bands to recognize a loose unity to bind them in common opposition
to the villagers, and in this context they will define a correspondingly
wider territory, the forest, in which the villagers are regarded as
trespassers. At the other end of the scale, the nuclear family has no
territorial claims except those held jointly with other families of the
same band. An individual may stake his claim to a tree that he knows [222]
or believes will yield honey, or to one that promises to provide good [314]
bark for making into cloth. A common way of showing that the tree
is claimed is by tying a vine around the trunk at shoulder height.

A claim thus made by no means gives the individual or his family 423
exclusive ownership of the tree or exclusive rights to its produce, how- 222
ever. It merely conveys the right for that individual to have the first 314
opportunity for collecting the honey or for cutting the bark. When 476
the honey is collected or the bark cut, it is done collectively and the
claimant is subject to all the usual rules governing the sharing of
forest produce. He will have precedence of choice and his share will
be larger. If he is not on hand when the honey is ready, however, and
if he does not signify his intention to come to claim it, his right is
forfeited. It may be seen that the advantage accruing from this slight 621
departure from the norm of joint band ownership of the territory 423
and its produce is in no way great enough to detract from the central 131
value of communal territory, but at the same time it is sufficiently

● 621 great to provide some incentive for individual effort and, much more
423 important, it also provides some incentive for a wandering member
131 of a band to return to his home territory at least once a year, for the honey season.[1]

The territory of any band is always ample for its needs. That is perhaps the safest way of defining the size of band territory. Never, in any part of the forest, have I come across any complaint of the insufficiency of a hunting territory, in terms of either size or produce. Nor are there sufficient instances of trespass to indicate that any band suffers from inadequate natural resources. In every case that I have investigated the band has been able to define its boundaries by citing rivers, streams, mountain ridges, ravines, caves, or other locally well-
131 known natural landmarks. These boundaries generally extend one
621 day's march in one direction, three days' march in the other. The
423 shorter base is invariably parallel to the line, a trail or road, connect-
484 ing two villages, though it may well overlap it. A "day's march" is
487 the way the Mbuti generally define distance, and in practice this
[822] means that the first day in from the base line is the longest distance, extending perhaps as far as thirty miles. Beyond this the territory is less intensively traveled, the trails are more difficult to follow, and the third day in may represent only ten or fifteen miles. The base line, similarly, is comparatively short, being perhaps the least hunted as it is the closest to the village. Also, as the forest in this area will have been penetrated by villagers in search of building materials, it is generally much more difficult to traverse than the virgin forest a mile or so further in.

In using this measure of time anddistance, the Mbuti do not think of how far a single hunter could travel in a day, but rather how far the whole band could travel, as if shifting camp. A single man could travel almost twice the distance. This is a small point, but serves as an indication of the way in which the Mbuti see the world around them, in terms of the potentiality of the whole band.

131 The territory of the Epulu band (Map 6)^ was defined by a series
133 of rivers: the Harama, the Itoro, and the Epulu to the northeast, the east and the south, and by the small Nepussi and a series of hills and caves to the west. As usual, the innermost boundary was the least

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[1] This also seems to be the season when bark-cloth manufacture is at its height, perhaps largely because more time is available during this season. But bark cloth is made throughout the year, and fresh sources of the best barks are always eagerly sought and claimed.

^[see page 221 -- Analyst]

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for
136 granted in any part of the forest, except possibly that small triangle
137 bounded by the three roads joining the administrative centers of Mambasa, Irumu and Beni (Map 4),[1] where the roads and the heavy concentration of foreign settlements, coffee plantations, hospitals, missions and mines have considerably affected the natural resources
311 and the natural patterns of game migration. There is no economic
166 need for trespass. Each territory is large enough for a band to roam
131 within it for year after year, never twice occupying the same camp
[628] site, never exhausting its supplies of food or the materials needed for
[621] shelter and clothing and the rest of the minimal Mbuti material culture.

628 All of which is not to say that boundaries are not crossed. They
224 are crossed, either when hunters commit trespass or when individuals
685 or families visit relatives in other bands. In the case of trespass, a
131 band of hunters may pursue game across a boundary stream, particularly if it is one of the more prized animals. An elephant would almost certainly be pursued, but it is understood that the band whose territory is so violated has certain rights to the spoils. Such trespass is considered excusable under these conditions. Generally, however, a band will never hunt near its boundaries if the neighboring band is in the vicinity of the same boundary.

628 The only cases of uncondoned trespass known to me are rare in-
222 stances when a band has found itself short of honey during the brief
685 honey season, and has invaded its neighbor's territory and actually
131 set up temporary camp there. This was considered inexcusable only because permission was not first sought.

629 If trespass is rare, boundaries are being crossed frequently for the
166 approved purpose of visiting relatives, consanguineal or affinal. In-
574 dividuals or whole families sometimes wander in this way until they
131 are several territories distant from their home territory. By "home territory" an Mbuti would mean the territory in which he most habitually hunted, and in which he has established certain claims to honey or bark trees. He would be unlikely to attempt to define it in terms of clan or lineage concepts; that is, he would refer to the territory rather than to the band. This habitual exchange of visits is, in fact, the major social communication that exists between one band and another, but it also has a secondary economic significance: a band that becomes too large for convenience may split, a part of it going to join another band that has perhaps fallen below the optimum economic size. The major purpose of interband visits is the extension

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyst]

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of the social horizon, particularly necessary in view of the preferred 166
territorial exogamy. When the Mbuti say that they like to "marry 574
far," they think primarily in terms of spatial distance, on the assump- 131
tion that this will provide the necessary kinship distance. Thus 628
territory is used, in the absence of a formalized kinship system, to ex- 166
press and maintain the necessary degree of exogamy. Territory is also 574
used as the concept by which men and women define "home," and it 131 582
is through territorial membership that any individual has such rights
as he has. Above all, it is the territory which has bounds, not the band.

## COMPOSITION

Both archer and net-hunter bands exhibit the greatest complexity 621 •
in composition, particularly when large, but also sometimes even 614
when fragmented into the smallest segments. The Epulu band, over 613
the course of a year, was made up of twenty-seven patrilineages sharing seven totems, although the largest single camp contained only twenty-six family huts. Of these twenty-seven lineages, each of which has a name (possibly in imitation of village clan names) and a totem, only two are divided into more than one totemic group: the Puemi respect the leopard or the chimpanzee, the Bokelé respect the leopard or the buffalo or a rare antelope. The Puemi and the Bokelé alone, then, may be considered as clans, and even they only with reservation, for though each totemic group of the Bokelé (or the Puemi) claims to be related to the other through a distant ancestor, the ancestor remains unnamed and is never invoked, and it is admitted that intermarriage might take place. There is no record of such intermarriage, and certainly the lineage is exogamous. In the accompanying plans these totemic subgroups, then, are considered and represented as separate lineages.

For three large camps (over twenty huts[8]) made by the Epulu band within a twelve-month period, the following is the breakdown, giving the number of patrilineages and lineage totems represented in each camp, counting the husband, widower or rare bachelor hut-owner on the one hand, the wife or widow on the other, and counting only those living and present at the time:

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[8] A hut is normally occupied by a nuclear family, but may sometimes be occupied only by a bachelor, widower or widow. Also, rarely, a married son and his wife may stay temporarily in the hut of either parents (more likely the parents of the son). By and large, however, a hut represents an economic unit owning no more than one net. [592]

• 621
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613

| | | *Male Members* | | *Female Members* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Camp 3a – in | 26 huts, there were | 13 lin. | 5 tot. | 9 lin. | 6 tot. |
| 3b – | 22 | 10 | 5 | 10 | 6 |
| 3c – | 22 | 12 | 5 | 11 | 5 |

When the band fragmented into small camps, the picture was not far different:

| | | *Male Members* | | *Female Members* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Camp 3d – in | 9 huts, there were | 5 lin. | 5 tot. | 5 lin. | 4 tot. |
| 3e – | 9 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 3 |
| 3f – | 6 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 |
| 3g – | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 |

Apart from the totemic subdivisions of the Puemi and Bokelé, the lineages all intermarry freely and do not consider themselves related to each other in any way whatsoever other than as affines.

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The camp plans (Plans 3a–g)^A indicate the extent to which the lineages maintained their separate identities in the above camps. If we consider the lineages of both the husband and wife, we can see a slight tendency for women to build the family huts so that men of the same lineage will be near each other. The significance of this is [578] dubious, and the rest of camp life does not indicate lineage to be of any particular interest, although in disputes lineage members tend to support each other, but not necessarily.

[184] With other bands of net-hunters and also with archers the situation seems similar, though there is some tendency, perhaps, for the lineage divisions to be more visible in archer camps (see Plans 4a–m). 621 114 I was not able to stay long enough in these other camps to thoroughly verify the genealogies, however, or to observe what changes took place from camp to camp. The material is all the more interesting, nonethe- [614] less, in that in the first instance I was always told that the camp consisted of one "clan" (using the village terminology), yet they did not deny the possibility of marriage within that unit.[4] This is another indication of how difficult are the conditions of work among the Mbuti, when they are constantly using words that have definite and very specific significance when used by the villagers, but which may have a completely general and other meaning among the Mbuti. The

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[4] "Clan" terminology is used freely by the Mbuti when talking to villagers. It is rarely used in the forest, and was used to me only in response to my genealogical inquiries.

^A[see pages 340-345 -- Analyst]

The figures for six net-hunter bands and seven archer bands, where I am 621
most certain of the genealogies, are as follows: 613

| | | Total No. of Lineages | Members Male | Members Female |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| NET-HUNTERS | | | | |
| In Camp 4a there were | 28 huts, | 10 | 5 lin. | 9 lin. |
| 4b | 18 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 4c | 16 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| 4d | 13 | 7 | 5 | 5 |
| 4e | 11 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| 4f | 8 | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| ARCHERS | | | | |
| In Camp 4g there were | 25 huts, | 8 | 6 lin. | 6 lin. |
| 4h | 11 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 4i | 10 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| 4j | 10 | 6 | 4 | 4 |
| 4k | 9 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 4l | 6 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| 4m | 5 | 3 | 1 | 2 |

Owing to the difficulty of ascertaining the lineage membership of the women, the above figures, for them, are probably minimal. I also [114] found it difficult to be certain of the totemic observances elsewhere than among the Epulu band, where I had ample opportunity for cross-checking, but the proportions elsewhere appeared similar—in any band you would expect to find each lineage sharing its totem with one other lineage. The plans of the above camps (Plans 4a–m)[1] indicate the [361] possibility of greater lineage solidarity among the archers, if we are [184] to judge by the disposition of the huts, but the significance of the lineage did not appear much different. Structurally it seemed of little importance.

We cannot arrive at any immediate conclusions from these examples of camp composition beyond the Epulu, but drawn as they [128] [361] are from bands selected for study at random, at the extremities of the forest as well as in its center, they at least indicate that the Epulu situation is not unique. Returning to the Epulu band, then, we are left with the fact that even a cursory glance indicates clearly a certain lack of lineage interest as manifest in the physical arrangement of the hunting camps. It certainly indicates that the band as a whole in no way and at no time resembles a patrilineage in its composition. With

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[1] [see pages 346-351 -- Analyst]

• 621 613 this in mind we shall go on to discover the nature and extent of lineage participation in band activity, but the nonlineal nature of the corporate unit—i.e., the band or sub-band—has first to be examined in another context.

## FRAGMENTATION, FISSION AND FUSION

We have already mentioned that the band may be large or small, that it may be established in a single large camp or in a number of smaller camps. In examining the process of fission and fusion, it is plain that lineage considerations are by no means paramount, but that, if anything, there is some effort to maintain nonlineal composition even in the smaller camps. That is to say, there is at least a consciousness of lineage and an apparently felt need to maintain some kind of balance between lineages. Whereas the process of fission and
621 361 fusion—the division of the band into small segments, each with its own hunting camp within the hunting territory, and the eventual realignment of the band as a single unit—is systematic, it is not without an element of the less systematic process of fragmentation that takes place within any single camp, large or small, and which starts the day the camp is first established.

The whole shifting complex is best understood by looking at the camp plans at the end of the book. As each hut represents a married
[613] couple with or without unmarried children, Plans 5 and 6,[1] respectively, show the lineage groupings according to male and female membership for the camp named *apa* Lelo. *Apa* Lelo was one of the larger camps and is as typical as any. Plan 7[2] shows the significant changes made in the direction in which the huts faced as the camp took shape, day by day.

On looking at Plans 5 and 6 it is evident that not only does the shape of the natural clearing lend itself to the division of the camp into sections, but that these sections show as much consideration for affinal as for consanguineal ties. Plan 7 shows how the natural divisions offered by the clearing were made plainer by the addition of screens to hut entrances, or by rebuilding huts so as to face them in different directions. The fallen tree trunk and a clump of undergrowth are also utilized, and in other camps such undergrowth was eventually cleared if the reason for making use of it disappeared.

[613] When we examine the camp, section by section, it will be seen again that lineage is only one of many factors in determining the social groupings within the camp.

[1,2] [see pages 355-357 respectively -- Analyst]

social groupings within the camp. Plan 8[A] offers a dramatic example 621
of the kind of major change that can take place in any one camp, 361
and of the kind of change that may lead to ultimate fission, and that
is certainly likely to determine one of the lines of cleavage when fission
does take place. The change was brought about by the arrival of a
controversial sometime member of the band, Cephu.[5]

The camp was already settled at optimum-to-maximum size when, 621
on the fifth day, Cephu arrived. He used to migrate from his natal 361
band to this one, and was not overly welcome in either. He arrived 578
by stealth with his father's brother's son, and their families pitched 614
their belongings in a small clearing near the main camp. They were [166]
joined by a member of the important Puemi clan of the main camp,
whose wife was friendly with Cephu's womenfolk. Their camp established, they opened a trail leading directly into the main camp. The various reactions, seen in Plan 7, effected a consolidation of the southwest corner of the main camp and caused a rift between two sets of brothers: M and N (N having joined Cephu while M pointedly rebuilt a new hut in the main camp), and D and I, D setting up with Cephu, his brother I and nephew J refusing to leave the main camp and join him.

Even more important, the consolidation of the southwest and, to some extent, the southeast corner of the main camp involved the southward realignment of S, T and U, S and U being highly influential elders, T being one of the greatest hunters. T and U were members of one section of the dominant Puemi clan, the other section being localized in the north part of the camp.

Plans 9 and 10[B] illustrate the rather more radical change that may 621
take place, effecting a temporary consolidation of lineages. Such 361
changes within a camp are extremely rare however—in this case the 613
consolidation was of the lineages concerned in a vital dispute against [578]
one of their members, the same controversial Cephu guilty of a serious
hunting crime. Table 4 gives the relevant kinship structure for this particular camp, and Table 5 gives the complete list of lineages, as far as I could trace them, with indications as to which individuals were effective members of the Epulu band during the year.[C]

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[5] I use personal names that were used in the forest, though some Mbuti use different names when in the village. It is perhaps significant that Cephu is a common name among the ill-considered Ngwana, and that Cephu's children were also mostly known by villager names or even by European names, such as "Teresa," currently in vogue among the villagers. Any one Mbuti might be known by as many as four names, certainly two or three. The names used here correspond to those used elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961) from which source some additional information on the personalities involved may be gleaned. [551]

[A, B] [see pages 358-359 respectively -- Analyst]

[C] [see pages 393 A-F; 326 -- Analyst]

361 When the camp is first set up, the framework of the huts is com-
342 pleted, but they are probably only partly roofed. The greater the
621 distance between camps, the later the band arrives and the less opportunity there is to complete the building that day. Sometimes shelter is sought overnight at an old camp site on the way. But however advanced the work may be on the first day, subtle changes take place for the next two days, during which time lagging members of the band will have arrived.

342 The first to reach the site choose any location they wish for their
621 family hut, the choice being left almost entirely to the women. Men,
476 women and children co-operate in the necessary work of clearing and
462 of cutting and collecting the saplings and phrynium roofing leaves (*mongongo*). Women build the huts, sharing the supply of saplings and leaves as necessary, and helping each other with the building if darkness is approaching or if rain threatens. Such help seems to fol-
[572] low lines of friendship rather than of kinship, as does the grouping
[614] of the huts themselves.
[613]

361 For instance, the tight cluster at the north end of the camp (Plans
621 5 and 7) was brought about because of the death of Balekimito, an
613 old and respected lady who was a member of the Puemi/leopard lin-
765 eage, but married into the Bomasua/buffalo lineage. Both lineages were jointly holding the *molimo* festival for the dead lady, and the *kumamolimo* (*molimo* hearth) was placed in the center of their rather exclusive cluster. The presence of two male and two female members of another lineage, the Bokelé/buffalo, should be noted, however, as an instance of the strength of affinal ties (the same thing being evident at the southern end of the camp).

361 However, the Puemi and the Bokelé were the only ones in that
621 part of the camp to arrive on the first day. They built their huts facing
593 equally toward each other and toward the *kumamolimo*. When
595 Ekianga, member of the Bomasua and son of the dead lady, arrived
613 the next day with two of his three wives, there was an immediate change in all the huts. When Amabosu (β) saw Ekianga (B) occupy the hut built by his youngest wife, Amabosu's sister, he took action. His own wife, who was Ekianga's sister, built an extension to the house facing it almost directly away from her brother, looking right into the entrance to the hut of Ausu (α), her husband's kinsman. The reason was that Amabosu felt Ekianga should not be sleeping with his youngest wife at that time, and wanted to show his displeasure. Ausu, not wanting to take sides, carefully projected the

entrance to his hut so that it no longer looked directly at Amabosu's, 361
which would have been taken as indicating extreme intimacy, but 621 •
instead faced narrowly across to the hut of his wife's uncle (C), 613
Masisi; Masisi's son's wife (D), who was not only kin to Ekianga's 593
young wife but close friends with her, promptly added to her hut, 595
despite her husband's protests, and faced it boldly toward Ekianga.
Ekianga's young wife, Kamaikan, responded the next day by facing
her hut in the direction of her friend, at the same time deflecting it
away from her co-wife's hut, Arobanai (A), next door. Arobanai had
on the day of her arrival made an addition facing toward Kamaikan
as a conciliatory gesture, but in face of this rebuff she turned the
entrance of her hut away again. Meanwhile Masisi's lineal cousin,
Manyalibo, made no effort to enter the dispute, but rather turned
slightly toward the rest of the camp. Masisi contented himself with
completing the entrance to his hut on the second day, leaving it
facing the way it was. An extension he built several days later, as did [881]
Ausu, was merely to provide separate accommodation for young girls
who were approaching puberty.

In the rest of the camp similar petty jealousies and hostilities 361
brought about similar clusterings. Njobo (W-1A), for instance, was 157
an unusually dominating personality, and was consequently accorded, 554
or took, the position of *capita*, representing the band in all matters 578
concerning the village. But he was unwise enough to try and assert 621
the same authority in the forest, and the over-all layout of the camp
shows clearly how he and his sister's son, Asuku (W-3A), whom he
favored, were ostracized. His wife Masamba (X) built my hut for me, [122]
as women sometimes do for adult bachelor kinsmen, to one side, and
another hut for strangers on the other side. Maipé (G), the son of
another of Njobo's sisters, was the only one to allow his hut to remain
facing toward Njobo. After Njobo had left, Nikiabo (H) joined the
camp and Masamba built his hut for him, facing toward her own,
saying she needed a friend. Makubasi (U), a prominent hunter and a
member of the same clan as Njobo, but of a different lineage, turned
his hut away on the second day, isolating Njobo in the middle of the
clearing. At this, Njobo and his nephew, Asuku, joined their huts
together, using only one entrance facing across to Njobo's other
nephew, Maipé. When Makubasi's father, Tungana (T), arrived on
the third day, he built his hut so that one entrance nominally faced
toward Njobo, but it was generally covered and the other entrance
faced clearly into the southwestern section of the camp.

361 Arriving on the same day as old Tungana came Moké, who built
342 a large rectangular hut (S) in the center of Tungana's section. The
621 two men claimed kinship with each other, Tungana allegedly having
[602] on his mother's side the same great-grandfather as Moké. Endeku,
who was a son-in-law of Moké, was also a renowned clown, and the
hut he built was wide open on two sides, so that it was little more
361 than a roof. It stood close to Moké's hut and was an effective link
621 between that cluster and the southern cluster, which included some
578 members of Cephu's sub-band. Endeku's hearth became a gathering
place for the southern part of the camp, just as the *kumamolimo* did
for the north. Njobo and Asuku were received politely at either, but
not with any enthusiasm. When Njelu and Betuli (M and L) arrived
on the second day and, because of their mutual affinal relationship,
built their huts close together, their neighbor Masimongo (K) turned
his hut away for no evident reason at all. Betuli reacted by turning his
back on Masimongo, joining his hut to Njelu's. One day later Njelu
built a new hut a few yards away, still facing it toward Betuli, however.
He said he did not like his "sister" so close to him. Actually,
[614] Betuli's wife was of the same clan as Njelu, but of a different lineage.
[613] Although Njelu's wife, kin of Pangia (P) and Betuli, had left him,
Njelu always preferred to move and camp with his affines, even
though they usually camped with Cephu, who was somewhat in conflict
with Njelu's own, Puemi clan. At the time the camp was built,
Cephu was not present, but most of the Cephu sub-band members
occupied the southern part of *apa* Lelo together. With them were
Kelemoké and Masalito (J and I), who were members of Cephu's
own lineage, but who preferred to camp with the main camp, whereas
Cephu usually made a sub-camp of his own.

When Cephu arrived, three days after the establishment of the
[597] main camp, he built a camp (Plan 8) of his own a short distance
away, then connected it to the main camp by a narrow trail. The trail
leading from the sub-camp to the village was closed after some protest,
as it effectively offered a second point of entry to the main camp
from the village, through Cephu's camp. In the same camp as Cephu
(FF) were two others—his kinsman, Masalito's older brother Abeli
(DD), and Njelu's older brother, Toko (BB), who moved from the
main camp the moment Cephu arrived. For some reason, at this
point, Njelu moved back to his old hut adjoining Betuli. It was only a
few yards further from Cephu's camp, but it was a significant few
[613] yards. Njelu and Toko had married two patrilineal cousins, so Toko's

wife was, like Pangia and Betuli, a member of the lineage that nor- 361
mally associated with Cephu. Three days later, however, two more 621 •
female kinsmen of Toko arrived, also members of the rival Puemi/ 613
chimpanzee lineage, and they too joined Cephu's camp. The two 598
camps had effectively divided two sets of brothers, indicating much more sharply than the more subtle divisions within the main camp the extent to which lineage values may be counteracted and even superseded by other values.

In the following chapters we shall see more of the kind of petty disputes and hostilities that bring about this shifting of alliances, and the gradual fragmentation of a camp into distinct sections. It should suffice for the moment to have this one example of a single camp in a state of flux from the first day of its existence, and to know that this flux, whatever its cause, cut directly across unilineal descent groupings as conceived by the villagers.

Apart from the personal, unpredictable causes for constantly chang- 621
ing alliances, there are other factors that can always be relied on to 574
introduce change into a camp, cutting across unilineal descent lines and causing further change in its balance. Visits from affines and to affines are one such factor; such visits sometimes become permanent, as can be seen in the composition of this particular band. Visits to neighboring villages may also affect the balance of its internal sections as, apart from the major co-operative activity of the hunt, there are other activities calling for co-operation of only a few people, and such smaller co-operative units almost invariably fall within the sec-
tions that divide the camp. If a section becomes depleted because [476]
some of its members have gone visiting, it may be forced to co-operate with another section in activities such as gathering, collecting firewood and building materials, repairing nets, and so forth.

Not having seen an archer *begbe* beat-hunt camp, which approxi- 621
mates in size, as in hunting technique, to the normal net-hunting 184
camp, I can supply no material for comparison of the process of frag- 224
mentation. The smaller, and for the archers more normal, camps are [114]
similar, however, and exhibit the same tendencies but with less emphasis. This may possibly be related to the fact that the smaller camps involve food-getting technologies that do not call for large-scale co-operation, but which demand the co-operation of two or three adults. Thus such divisions as may appear on the formation of such a camp tend to be rather more stable, and with the archers they are certainly

621 [224 184] more related to the demands of economic co-operation than to any other factor.

But however stable a camp may become after the initial fragmentation, that fragmentation is but an indication of the more systematic processes of fission or fusion that come into play each time a camp moves. Plan 11[1] gives the layouts of each camp built by the Epulu band for a period of over a year, and the cyclic process is quite clear. For the net-hunters a large camp is normally advantageous, although beyond a certain point a net-hunt becomes unwieldy. But once a [621] [622] year comes the honey season, when hunting is of secondary importance, and it is more advantageous for the band to be split into two or more sub-camps, thus tapping the territory's honey resources more effectively.

361 621 578 The series of camp plans shown indicates how the process of fragmentation as observed at work within *apa* Lelo is continued and sharpened with the building of each new camp. Sites are even chosen because they afford greater privacy between the various sections, thus minimizing any serious disputes that are in progress. Some interpersonal hostilities will persist, however, and it is these and not lineal relationships that are reflected in the final fission, when the camp divides into a number of independent camps, or sub-bands, each going its own way. If the dispute is serious, one or another sub-band may go off to another territory, and seek to join up with that band. This was in fact Cephu's situation. During the honey season he left the Epulu territory and went back to his home territory to claim his honey trees. But that territory was occupied by a large band where Cephu's hunting chances were no greater than those of anyone else, and this was not to Cephu's liking. Cephu tried to carve out a territory for himself, between his own band and the Epulu band, but he was always being forced by sheer economics to join the one or the other. [224] He could never induce enough men to camp with him to set up an effective independent net-hunt. For this a minimum of seven is generally required, and Cephu could seldom raise above six.

So the monthly change of camp is an opportunity not only for a diplomatic rearrangement of the layout, minimizing latent hostilities, but it is also an opportunity for improving the economic strength of the band by either adding to it or subtracting from it.

[221] The honey season itself is a last opportunity for old hostilities to fade away, and the complete separation of the sub-bands into camps many miles apart generally resolves most sources of friction. If dis-

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[1] [see pages 392 A-D -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

agreement persists, however, then when the honey season ends and the band is forced to resume net-hunting, and therefore has to rejoin its forces in the common interest of an effective net-hunt, one or another of the dissident segments will join up with another band in another territory. It is said that it would not stay within the same territory and hunt there, even if it were numerically strong enough. 361 221 598 221

Thus we can say that the composition of each camp is ad hoc, responding to the needs of the moment rather than to any preconceived plan, or to any notion derived from tradition. The lines of division are never the same; the reasons for division are nearly always personal. The system does not lie here, then, but rather in the economy, which favors a unified camp for the major part of the year and a divided camp for a brief two months or so. The complete break and freedom of separate association allowed by the honey season (which is also a particularly bountiful season as far as vegetable foods are concerned) is, in fact, what makes practical this otherwise apparently unsystematic flux. That the flux has a function we shall shortly see. 621 121 [221]

For the archers much the same process pertains. The economics work in reverse, however, for the *begbe* season is made an occasion for the entire band to gather together. Normally, throughout the year, the band is divided into three or four small sub-bands, all within their common territory. Tracking and ambushing and using the bow and arrow do not call for co-operation among more than two or three or four men. A large camp of, say, twenty-four men would then have at least six hunting parties setting off each day, and this would necessarily mean frequent changes of camp. A small camp, however, sending out two parties in opposite directions, can remain in the same area for a long time without scaring the game away. There are few occasions for members of different sub-bands to get together during this time, except for casual visits. Once a year the whole band unites, however, for the communal beat-hunt known as *begbe*. The mechanism for convening the whole band and the exact time of year this takes place, if there is a special time of year, are not clear either in the literature or from my own records. Each archer band I visited, however, assured me that it was near the honey season, and I suspect before the honey season. 621 224 221 184

However, the essential remains the same. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, there is a process of fission followed by fusion —or perhaps, in the case of the archers, it would be better to say there is a process of fusion followed by fission. We now have to try and 621 121 [184]

• 621 discover, at least for the net-hunters of Epulu, what is the structure
121 of this process.

We have seen that the band is plainly a nonlineal entity; it cannot
621 even truly be called bilateral, as descent is not counted on either side
613 for practical purposes.* Lineages are known, and these are always
[611] patrilineages, but they seem to have little economic, political or even
religious significance. The only time the lineage is mentioned with any frequency is when discussing the merits or otherwise of a proposed marriage, and then it is not the lineage name that is usually mentioned, but rather the names and relationships of the individuals concerned, their parents and grandparents. It can be seen from the plans, in any case, that the process of fission and fusion under discussion is not one that supports the integrity of unilineal descent groups, but rather one that cuts across such groups.

621 Nor can the nonlineal nature of the band or the flux of band
613 composition be attributed solely to the ecology. The situation is
184 comparable between the archers and the net-hunters, and yet each of these
[224] groups practices a different hunting technique, and the process of
fission and fusion takes an opposite direction. Either the archers or
[174] the net-hunters could, in fact, operate perfectly efficiently without all
the internal movement that we have seen, and they may very well
621 once have operated as patrilineal bands. While in no way supporting
613 those who suggest that band composition is due to local ecology,
174 it is undeniable that there is an interest in lineage, evident in the
attempt to balance lineages and prevent lineage dominance. Further, the camp plans indicate a general tendency toward lineage solidarity, particularly in times of crisis. For instance, with reference to Plans 9 and 10, the normally unsystematic camp plan that pertained (9) was abruptly altered and became divided along strict lineage lines when one of the sub-band members, Cephu himself, committed the unforgivable crime of placing his net in front of others during the
hunt. The only significant relationship of the flux to forest life is
[182] that it enables the band to respond to changes in environmental
221 conditions by altering its size. It must also be admitted that it is

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* Some misunderstanding may arise owing to different usages of descent-system terminology. Some schools of thought consider "bilateral" as synonymous with "cognatic," and hold that the terms include all affines and do not imply any differences in the method of tracing descent. To such an extent, perhaps the Mbuti band may be termed bilateral or cognatic, but to me, and I believe to others, both terms imply one kind of descent system or another, placing an emphasis on lineage that is not characteristic of the Mbuti band and therefore to be eschewed.

important, for both net-hunters and archers, that a hunter should 621 •
know well the habits of those who are near him on the hunt. Insofar [768]
as children learn to hunt mostly but by no means entirely from their [224]
fathers, it is obvious that brothers are likely to be most familiar with
each other's hunting techniques, and will thus make the best hunting P
partners. But against this work many other practices, such as com- [857]
munal hunting games for all children, regardless of relationship, and [597]
the frequency of adoption, and of assimilation of adult strangers into [609]
the band. [563]

If we cannot find any explanation for the flux and instability that C
seem characteristic of the band in terms of kinship or economy, or 563
indeed in terms of any aspect of forest life, both become immediately 613
meaningful in considering the relationship between the band and 648 P
the village. Without going into this in detail at the moment, it must 621
already be evident that the system, or lack of it, must be unhappily 613
confusing for the patrilineal patrilocal villagers, who claim both 166
lineal and territorial rights over Mbuti bands. For as we have seen, 177*
a band does not maintain any kind of unilineal integrity even within a single camp, let alone from one camp to the next. And owing to the wider flux, caused by the constant process of fission and fusion, the band has merely territorial reference and cannot be said to apply to specific individuals or lineages. A lineage such as Cephu's may be in the Epulu territory one month and in Ebiani the next. So with every lineage, as with every individual, there is an infinity of territories to which he may move if it pleases him, and the system, such as it is, encourages such movement to the point that no villager can ever be sure of what Mbuti lineages are hunting in "his" territory. Let us leave it for the moment, then, that at least one possible structural result of the combination of the nonlineal nature of the band and its tendency to flux is the counteraction of the village system, rendering the villagers' lineal and territorial claims impractical of assertion.

## THE FAMILY

It would of course, be ridiculous to deny that there is any system P 181
of kinship, but it is certain that the kinship system does not have 611
the same importance as a focal point of social control as it may in
other African societies. To my mind this is undeniably linked to the P
ad hoc nature of the society, with its almost complete lack of concern [822]
for the past, as for the future. This is something we shall discover in

bers of each age level may be *apua'i* to each other doubly underlines 561
the importance of this age grouping as a structural principle of their 601
society, because it not only effectively allies members of the same
age group, but it cuts across any unilineal descent pattern. Even
though, if pressed, any one *apua'i* can and will trace his relationship
to almost any other, through either cognatic or affinal lines, among
themselves this is never done. The functions of the age group, also,
have little to do with kinship.

The age group forms the next unit above the nuclear family, each 561
having its own functions and its own sphere of authority. Above the 621
age group one might consider the band to be divided into alliances 857
of age groups, though their function would be less easy to define. 883
However, such alliances do take place, generally in major disputes,
where youths and children might ally against hunters and elders. Char- [192]
acteristically, disputes concerning premarital sexual activity, betrothal [578]
and *bopi* (playground) activity are the major occasions for such al-
liances. But the same element may be seen at work during the reli- [765]
gious *molimo* festival, where the group of adult men that sing around
a fire at night may divide the hearth into two or three fires. The unmarried youths nearly always have one fire for themselves around which they dance their erotic dances; the hunters (the younger married men) may have a fire of their own, or they may join the *mangesé*, the elders, men who are no longer as active in the hunt as they used to be.

621
Young married couples are held responsible for reproduction, but 594
only to a limited extent for the rearing and education of their chil- [561]
dren, for beyond the age of three or four a child becomes the responsi- [855]
bility of the band as a whole. As an economic unit the family is divided into the appropriate age groups as a co-operative part of the total band. Effectively much of its economic activity is directly for its own individual benefit, but there is nearly always some sharing even when there is no necessity for sharing, to emphasize the communal rights to forest produce. As a political unit the family only has internal jurisdiction of the most minimal kind. The punishment of a wife or a child, or the complaint of a child about its parents, quickly becomes a matter for communal discussion. As a religious unit the family is of little significance indeed. But every nuclear family is expected to participate in religious festivals, as symbolized when the *molimo* hearth is made up by taking embers from every family hearth, and when a camp is moved each family carefully takes an ember from

594 its own hearth to kindle its own fire in the new camp. The responsibility
• 621 of members of a nuclear family in times of crisis, such as birth, puberty, marriage and death, does not differ much from the responsibility of the band as a whole, the difference being one of degree or intensity.

561 The age group functions as a major institution of education, instructing
86 the group junior to it in its ways, preparing it for advance to the next, their own, level. Thus the care and education of children rests largely with youths and the oldest of the elders. Youths and hunters depend on each other in the joint hunting and gathering activities, the youths learning from their mothers and fathers all they will soon need to know as hunters themselves. Hunters gradually associate more and more with the *mangesé* (literally, "the great ones") around the evening fires, to listen to the talk of the elders and, in time, to participate.

561 As an economic unit the age group is of supreme importance. Children
857 scavenge and help supply their own needs through fishing, trapping,
883 snaring and any other forms of collecting or hunting within
[476] their means. In this they may at times be helped by the youths. The youths are of vital importance to the hunt, the girls acting as beaters with their mothers, and also collecting, while the boys stand guard at the extremities of the circle of nets, having assisted in setting up the nets. Youths may also be expected to perform a number of chores such as fetching wood and water into the camp. The hunters are the prime unit responsible for the sustenance of the band; the *mangesé* are absolved from such responsibilities and may expect to be fed, housed and clothed by the younger age groups.

561 Politically each age group has informal jurisdiction over its members,
626 utilizing ridicule and ostracism, sometimes driving a member
627 to seek acceptance in the lower age level, or justification by the upper. For a lower age level to ridicule or ostracize a member of a higher level is a supreme condemnation and a most powerful sanction.
[765] Further, it will be seen that part of the *molimo* festival is a morning tour of the camp by the youths, carrying the *molimo* trumpet and disguised by leaves and branches, at which time they single out the hut of any troublemaker, however young or old, and threaten to tear it to pieces. Even if there is no such troublemaker, the youths will go from hut to hut stripping a few leaves off the roof of each, causing other minor damage, simply representing the accepted principle of authority, of law and order.

Youths also have considerable say in the settling of any dispute 561
concerning betrothal, though ultimately it is the *mangesé* who decide 627
such matters. The hunters control all activities concerning the hunt
and the movement of camp. The *mangesé* act as general arbiters and [888]
are effectively a court of final appeal, their age entitling them to unquestioning
respect. Particularly in matters concerning betrothal 561
are the *mangesé* consulted, for their genealogical memory can be [582]
stretched to suit the occasion. And in the *molimo* festival, as in the [765]
*elima*, they share the honors with the youths: the hunters have to do
most of the work, supplying the food and cooking it for the nightly
or daily feasting, but the singing and dancing, which are central to
the festivals, are led by the *mangesé* and the youths.

In matters concerning relationship with other bands, the band as 621 ●
a whole, rather than any age group or association of age groups, decides 628
the issue. On such occasions even children will sit by and take 561
part.

We have already mentioned some of the religious functions of the 621
age groups, in association with their political functions, and it will 561
be seen that the two are closely interconnected. It might just be 765
pointed out here that in a *molimo* festival held for the death of an
Mbuti, age-group and band membership take precedence over family
membership. The youths will lead the dancing, and the leading youth [535)
will lead because he is the best dancer, not because he is related to
the dead person. Similarly with the singing led by the *mangesé*. The [533)
*molimo* horn may be supplied by anyone. The person who sings into
it is generally a youth, though sometimes a young hunter, again regardless
of kinship but on account of his renown and ability as a
singer.

Considering the very clear roles of the age groups, and their com- 621
prehensive nature, it is plain that any unilineal system of descent 611
would be highly disruptive. The loose laws of marriage and adoption, 561
which are permissive rather than prescriptive, preferential or prohibitive,
and the nonlineal nature of band composition allow for the
flexibility that is obviously necessary to maintain the proper balance
of recruitment into each age group.

Although a bilateral recognition of descent does exist and is some- 621
times utilized to provide the necessary balance of power, it can still 611
hardly be dignified by the term "lineage system." Owing to the non- [594]
lineal, territorial nature of band composition, and the frequency of
sister exchange, nuclear families may divide or remain united, regardless
of lineage, depending upon the context.

621 gardless of lineage, depending upon the context. Affinal ties are considered
61 just as legitimate, and used just as frequently in balancing
[602] power and in determining allegiance as cognatic ties. In this way
[182] security is guaranteed to any individual because of the number of
[571] recognized social groups to which he can claim membership. This
ambivalence is again an important structural principle, and is certainly
manifest in the social groupings observable in the building of
successive hunting camps.

621 If age rather than kinship fixes one's place within the band, then,
561 we have to consider how a band maintains any sense of continuity
from one generation to the next. There is the alliance of age groups
and the educational role of age groups which provide some degree of
continuity, but this would not be sufficient in view of what we have
said about the shifting composition of the band. It is undoubtedly
territory that gives the band its identity as such and enables that
identity to persist, and it is to his territory, as to his age group, rather
than to any kin group, that an Mbuti owes allegiance.

602 Kinship is recognized in assessing problems of inheritance, but
[429] with so little to inherit the problems are minimal. In general a man's
belongings are divided among his sons or, if his sons are too young,
they are held in trust for them by his brothers. Similarly with a woman's
[182] belongings. Kinship may also be used to maintain an economic
balance, just as it may be used to maintain a political balance, by
advancing claims to the spoils of a hunt on the ground of kinship, or
[611] indeed by advancing claims for the adoption of children. But again,
as such claims are advanced on grounds of both cognatic and affinal
ties, the principles of unilineal descent are directly contradicted.

621 In fact the nuclear family is best regarded as one of a number of
594 cells that make up the totality of the band, each cell reflecting the
same basic structure as the band itself. Within the family the factors
of territory and age also play a part, the locality of the hut symbolizing
the unity of the family and its separateness from others, the age
differential dividing the family in activity, authority and allegiance.
59 Even fission and fusion are a part of family life, as children are apt to
leave their natal family any time after they reach the age of three or
four, and either be adopted by or simply live for a while with another
family in the same band; or they may be adopted by a family in another
band and go to live there, even if their parents continue living
together in their home band. Such separations within the band do not
affect their relationship with other members of their family of the

CHAPTER 9

# The Life Cycle

## DAILY LIFE

621 626 594 The life of the nuclear family is so closely interwoven with that of the band that it is not always easy or possible to separate which activities and occasions are the concern of which. The difference is only one of degree, for even the most insignificant and routine action in the daily life of the family is potentially of major concern to the band as a whole. Thus a man seeking to borrow his brother's pipe may provide the occasion for a petty jealousy to flare up and divide the brothers, if not the camp (this case is quoted in full in the section on 62 183 Government). In fact, in a society where there is no formal legal institution for the redress of wrongs, individuals resort to self-help and forcibly bring their case to public attention by deliberately provoking an incident. It is important then that there should be a pattern of behavior that is generally accepted, and which covers every conceivable activity so that there may be some direction and constancy in the ensuing discussion. The degree of "general acceptance" is of course not of such rigidity as to preclude the flexibility necessary for the pursuit of justice. But beneath the evident ambivalence there is a recognizable pattern of things that should or should not be done. This pattern is sometimes most plain in matters that seem most trivial, such as the insistence that embers that fall from the fire should not simply be scooped or pushed back, but should be picked up and placed on top of the fire; the feeling that anyone passing through a stream should wash himself, or at least a part of himself, even if he crossed another turn of the same stream a few yards back. If anyone is silent and untalkative, this is considered unusual and unfortunate. If one trips up accidentally, or stumbles even while crossing the camp, without harming anyone or anything, there is a distinct air of reproach among the onlookers. Such patterns of generally accepted behavior

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are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, 183
but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier
incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully
embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly 621 •
abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where 183
one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the
band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and
concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship
between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and
fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of [166]
families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important
avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being
selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, 512
briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely 512
to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the 224
Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their
own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such
measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a
hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older [462
daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash 515
themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk 312]
go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later.
The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought [157]
back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside [252
for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect 264]
their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking
on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of
dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off
about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday
and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but [372
the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at 782]
the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt.
Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony.
It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange [576]
of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful [561]

888 hunter may initiate the action. Thus the *elima* and the *molimo*, which
627 are crisis festivals, are initiated by the hunters, but it is the elders who
578 control them and give them their spiritual quality. It is the elders who
[881] act not only as arbiters between the members of the band, but be-
[765] tween the band and the forest, between this life and the next. Even
in the most ordinary run of everyday life there is seldom a day that
does not demand from one elder or another, man or woman, some
opinion that will be couched in terms like "such and such is good for
(or pleasing to) the forest," or "this makes my spirit (*roho*) feel
good."

• 621 The greatest departures from daily life occur when the band visits
+177 the village, or when a villager visits the band. In either case it is as
512 though the whole social structure of the Mbuti were suddenly
changed. A single individual becomes, all at once, a chief. Age groups
break up and nuclear families come to the fore. The only central fire
will be that of the "chief." But as this is not part of the forest world,
exceptions occur within the forest context only rarely. There is sel-
621 dom any disaster such as the invasion of a camp by elephant, though
931 it happens sometimes. Hunting is generally more than adequate
512 throughout the year. But though hunger does sometimes come to the
Mbuti, starvation is unknown. Sickness is not uncommon, but is
rarely serious. Throughout the year daily life goes its usual way in-
terrupted only by major, inevitable crises of the life cycle.

## 844 BIRTH

Birth is the first crisis of life, and among the Mbuti it is, as else-
[165] where, not without its attendant dangers. Though no statistics are
available, it is the opinion of villagers and Mbuti, and of many Europeans, doctors and otherwise, who know both communities, that
infant mortality is appreciably less among the Mbuti, and sterility
[164] less common. This may be due to the fact that their relative isolation
has defended the Mbuti against the venereal diseases widespread
among the villagers. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the
Mbuti evidently feel less need for concern at childbirth. This applies
844 to both the nuclear family and to the band. There is absolutely no
621 formal recognition on the part of the band, and only the barest of
interest. Considering the fluid and nonlineal composition of the band
this is not surprising, particularly since, for this type of band, birth
is only one form of recruitment, and by no means the most sure or

effective. The only indication of band interest in birth is the prohibition 844
against married women procuring abortions, which are [621]
known and sometimes practiced among the unmarried girls, though [847]
rarely.

As far as the nuclear family is concerned the event arouses considerable [594]
happiness, and the mother's female age mates may gather [561]
with her to sing a few *elima* songs to celebrate the blessing of motherhood; [533]
a childless woman is regarded as the most unfortunate of beings. [564]
A few of the younger youths may show some interest, as the new child will before long become their responsibility for protection and instruction. After a few days, when the child is brought freely into the open, the hunters and elders will fondle it and compliment the parents. The father is as proud as the mother, and just as likely to carry the child around to show it off.

Medical precautions are minimal. The mother is likely to be off on [843]
the hunt, or on the trail somewhere when birth takes place; there is no lessening of activity for her during pregnancy. Childbirth is said to be effected easily, with complications only rarely happening. Any woman may act as midwife; the father should not be present. If there is delay the expectant mother may be massaged to help delivery, or she may be brought away from the camp into the forest, and sat close to a tree against which she pulls with a vine rope. Within two hours of delivery, if birth took place in the camp, the mother is apt to appear in the doorway of her hut, with a bundle wrapped in bark cloth held in her arms. Within the same period of time, if birth took place on the trail, she will continue her journey.

Although the father is not present at the birth in person, it must 844
be one of his arrow blades, or formerly a wooden or leaf knife made 846
by him, that will cut the umbilical cord. The blade is kept with the 412
cord until the child is old enough to make a bundle of them both, take them to a stream and bury them where they will get carried away by the next flood waters.

There is also knowledge of a custom of couvade, though I did not 846
find anyone who had practiced it. If the birth is slow, the father takes 844
off all his clothes and his sister-in-law washes and rubs him. She then goes to the place of labor, and when the child is born returns to the father, who must make a token gift before he can clothe himself again.

The father, and the mother's brother, if he is in the camp, cut special 846
vines daily and sprinkle their juices over both the baby and the 751
mother, "to make them strong." Some of these vines contain so much

Finally it may be remarked that whereas in many African societies, 851 including those of the neighboring villagers, birth fixes the social [171] position of an individual through the structural ramifications of kinship, among the Mbuti it achieves the same end, to a less fixed degree, by placing the individual in a specific age group and relating the infant to a specific locality. The child might not be reared in that locality, but the fact will remain valid as a claim to band membership throughout his or her life. Adoption is often agreed upon in order [597] that a child, or even an adult, may return to his natal band, regardless of what kin remain to him there.[1]

It will also be noticed that in the absence of the magical and supernatural 856 protections that are sought for a newly born child among 854 the villagers nearby, there is a lack of concern with the possibility of disaster, and only a concern that the child should be strong. Insofar [751] as this strength is conveyed by washing the baby with the juice of [778] forest vines, tattooing it with forest ashes, and binding it with forest symbols, this may be regarded as sympathetic magic. But it is better regarded as the beginning of a lifetime of close intimacy between the Mbuti and the forest, an intimacy that may or may not give the physical strength it is believed to convey, but that is undoubtedly responsible for the cohesive social strength found in this one omnipresent, omnipotent symbol of Mbuti unity, the forest.

The absence of formal ritual protection and of the invocation of 844 supernatural aid and attention at birth is the first clear indication [782] that for the Mbuti the norm is the good, and that this goodness derives [778] directly from the forest, physically and spiritually. Although [594] birth is primarily the affair of the nuclear family, all members of the [621] band share the pleasure and the pride of the parents, concern themselves with the welfare and education of the child according to the functions of the different age groups, but they do not see that it is necessary to make of birth what we might here call a "spiritual" occasion. In referring to childbirth the men and women alike say, simply, that "it is the work of women, it is what they are for." There is nothing abnormal about the event, nor is there any expectancy of danger or complication, and so the band does not see that it is necessary to intervene with a formal religious festival.

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[1] See Table 11 for examples of adoptions of boys and girls among net-hunters.

## P PUBERTY: THE *ELIMA*

881 At the next crisis in the life cycle, however, it is the band rather
• 621 than the nuclear family that takes charge. By early childhood the child has already grown away from its family to some extent, and become more a member of an age group cutting across kinship lines. At puberty the boy or girl may not even be living with kin any more, let alone in the nuclear family. But even if they are, the band takes control of the situation. It is an occasion that concerns the band as such, for adolescence leads into marriage, and marriage will inevitably bring about a significant change in the economic structure of the band. A member of the band may leave it, or a new member may join it, or, if the marriage is within the band, then at least there will still be an additional net, and a change in the hunting and gathering pattern and perhaps in interfamily alliances. The process of fission and
P fusion might also be affected by the political implications of the mar-
881 riage. The *elima* is best regarded as a premarital festival. It does not necessarily lead directly into a marriage that is marriage in the sense of a final, childbearing union. It is rather a preparation for marriage,
P an opportunity for the youngsters to find suitable partners. It does
[524 not even have to end in betrothal, so there cannot be said to be a
[182] functional connection between *elima* and marriage.

C
881 The arrival at puberty among boys being somewhat less easy to determine, the signal for an *elima* is the first appearance of menstrual blood in a young girl. This is something that fills the local villagers with horror, and with fear of evil influences against which they take elaborate ritual precautions to protect themselves. These precautions are costly and inconvenient, and the girl who has brought both shame and annoyance to her family is hidden and treated harshly. There are elaborate cleansing ceremonies for the girl and her family.
P Among the Mbuti, however, the appearance of menstrual blood is a
871 sign that the girl is now a potential mother, and it is consequently
P a signal for rejoicing and for preparation for motherhood. Thus an
[584] integral part of the festival is the selection of suitable potential husbands. Such selection demands that the boys prove their manhood, since it cannot be proven as simply as is the womanhood of the girl. In this sense, then, the *elima* is a joint initiation of boys and girls into adulthood. Having dealt with it in descriptive form elsewhere (Turn-

584 for permission for her to live with him. He will already have proved his manhood by running the gauntlet and by sleeping with the girl, and the fact that he has succeeded in these endeavors is alone proof of his acceptance. He now only has to prove himself as a hunter, and the act of betrothal is sealed by his killing one of the larger antelope and presenting it to the girl's parents, perhaps also with some other gifts, such as a bow and arrows, bark cloth, or a machete.

584 591 The girl then goes to live with him, unless it is considered preferable, probably on grounds of band size, for the boy to join the girl's band. In either case, or if they both belong to the same band, the girl simply builds a hut without any ceremony, and they live in it. No particular note is made of the occasion, though there may be a few jokes made at their expense, and they will be allowed considerable 58 freedom from camp routine for a few days. No further change in status [851] takes place until the girl becomes pregnant, at which time we might consider that the betrothal becomes effective as marriage. Separation before this takes place is perfectly possible and likely, and takes place without any comment, difficulty or restitution. Separation later, after childbirth, is more rare. If a couple have lived together for a long time (over a year) without having children, they will also be considered as married. This is unusual, however, for the object of marriage is in good part to have children, and if a couple fails, each will accuse the other of sterility and seek a new partner.

584 621 583 In seeking a partner who has not slept with him in the *elima* hut, a boy goes through the same procedure, except that the band will be called on to give its approval, and the prospective union will be discussed, elders having the most say. If he is refused, and if he and the girl are persistent, they may elope, joining another band. In this case that other band will be expected to provide a girl in exchange, for the system, such as it is, is one of sister exchange in the widest classificatory sense of the term. It frequently does take place between full brothers and sisters, but equally frequently there is no attempt to effect exchange so long as the married couple remains within the band. If the marriage is out of the band, then any return marriage, regardless of kinship, is considered to restore the balance. Again, in view of the constant fluctuation in band composition, it would be of no advantage for any more formal system to pertain.

## MARRIAGE

Betrothal and marriage among the Mbuti, then, are permissive. 583
Prescriptions and prohibitions are minimal, and even preferences are 584
not dominant. But permission of the band or bands involved is required. 621 •
In giving assent a band does not concern itself with the niceties
of the kinship relationships involved, nor with the question of
reciprocal obligations and privileges, except for the question of sister
exchange. While not expecting an immediate exchange to be made,
or even asking for a suitable future exchange partner to be named, the
band bears this reciprocal obligation in mind and will demand that it
be fulfilled the moment such fulfillment becomes necessary to band
composition.

Considerations in approving a betrothal or marriage are personal 584
and economic, and to a lesser extent political. The affections of the 581
two individuals concerned is of the utmost concern to everyone, for 157
great mutual affection is considered to lead to a "real marriage" rather
than an "empty marriage"; that is to say, affection is thought to carry
the desire for children, and will so bring stability to the marriage. But
the band is also concerned with the character of any individual, male
or female, who will join them through marriage. A boy wishing to
marry a notorious flirt and bring her to live with him is likely to meet
considerable opposition, and may have to go to live with her band. In
that case they will consider how faithful he is likely to be, or whether
he will find he prefers his own territory to his wife, and will abandon
her to return to his own band. In the general discussion that takes
place when a betrothal or marriage is proposed these are the kinds of
issues discussed, together with the personal habits of the newcomer
—cleanliness, laziness, talkativeness and noisiness.

The hunting and gathering abilities of the individuals are also discussed, 584
first to decide whether they are able to look after themselves, 581
and second in relationship to the band economy. As with personal 157
considerations, the discussion is of particular importance if one or the 621
other of the proposed partners is a newcomer. If the marriage is within
a band the same discussion takes place, but because both partners are
known well the problem is much simpler and arouses less argument.
There may still be differences of opinion, however, as to whether the
couple are likely to have a real marriage or an empty one.

The band will also discuss the question of residence. If the band is 584
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621

584 591 621 small it will wish a boy to stay or a girl to bring her husband to live with her. If the band is large, however, it will prefer to lose a member. If the marriage is within the band, and the band is large, the couple may still go to join another band, the choice of which being determined by size again, more than by any other consideration. The presence of friends or relatives and knowledge of the territory are important but secondary considerations. This question of residence falls primarily upon the hunters to decide; the elders have little to say.

## DEATH

761 602 [177] In death, the final crisis of the life cycle, we again see a lack of emphasis on kinship, though once more perhaps we should bear in mind that the contact between the Mbuti and the villagers has undoubtedly affected not only kinship and ritual terminology, but also kinship relations and ritual practice. Be that as it may, in the present context, death is of immediate concern to both the nuclear family and the whole band. 761 152 For the nuclear family, and for other members of the family who have during their lives been close to the deceased person, it is an occasion for grief. This grief is freely expressed by young and old together, and may at times become apparently uncontrollable. In the same way that the Mbuti are given to excessive bursts of laughter, often developing into near hysteria, so when they weep they do so with what amounts almost to violence. 761 763 152 Children of the deceased, without regard to age or sex, begin weeping the moment they hear the news of death, or as soon as a sick person indicates that he is not going to live much longer. If news of sickness or death reaches a relative some distance away, the relative will shout and yell rather than weep, and will continue this way until he reaches the camp where the sick person is lying. Immediately on entering the camp he will burst into tears, and wailing loudly will enter the hut and throw himself on the ground at the bedside of the dying person. Sometimes a close relative will injure himself with self-inflicted knife wounds, or by tying a halter around his neck and trying to strangle himself. Others pay little attention to these demonstrations of grief and I have never seen any serious injury result. [887] Elders look on, however, with some disapproval, and will intervene if there is any danger of such injury.

763 152 The rest of the adults in the band will sit around outside their huts, watching the wailers run in and out of the sick person's hut, and while they themselves are likely to be serious and upset they are also likely

766 [768] two or three yards of the hut, which in that case continues to be occupied. The main difference between the death of a child and that of an adult is that the death of an adult is likely to be made into an occasion for a *molimo* festival; a child's death is seldom marked in this way, and if at all then only briefly.

761 765 621 Because the *molimo* has more to do with life than death it is dealt with separately in the section on religious life of the Mbuti. Here it should simply be noted that it coincides with the efforts of the elders to restore normality as quickly as possible. While personal grief is recognized and allowed, it is still resented and every effort is made to minimize it by those not so directly concerned. The majority of the band make every attempt to maintain a normal daily routine, and to ignore the death as far as possible. The *molimo* itself calls for vigorous hunting during the daytime, and equally vigorous singing and dancing at night. It involves the entire band except the children and through its very emphasis on life it reinforces band solidarity. Through the sheer pleasure found in *molimo* activities personal grief is lessened, and through the symbolic nature of some of the songs and dances the despair that death could otherwise awaken is averted. Death is acknowledged, in the *molimo* fire dance, as inevitable and as being unconnected with any unnatural force. The *molimo* songs stress that if death occurs it must occur at the will of the forest, and since the forest is good then death must be good. The *molimo*, however, goes [778] beyond a mere acceptance of death, and many of the songs and dances are sheer expressions of joy in life, and the stated objective of the *molimo* is to make the forest happy, "to rejoice the *forest*."

76 621 594 Thus death affects the nuclear family through the personal nature of the loss, and it is the duty of the nuclear family, in the forest context, to dispose of the dead. They are prevented by the rest of the band from giving way to any prolonged exhibition of grief, and in any case by the time death takes place much of their grief has been spent in the last moments of sickness. The family may be aided by others in the burial, though help is not generally needed. But from that moment on, the band takes charge of the situation and concentrates on restoring the normality of life. The extent to which the *molimo* is a band affair rather than the affair of the nuclear family concerned will be seen later. It will also be seen, then, how death is made into an occasion for reaffirming the bonds of age groups, and for establishing their distinct responsibilities.

761 765 If life begins, for the Mbuti, with little fanfare, it ends with one

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of the most dramatic festivals possible. The *molimo* is not concerned 761
with the death of the individual, nor with securing safe passage for 765
the soul, but rather with affirming a belief in life and in the continuity [182]
of life and in the continuity of the band, despite the fact of death. [621] •

It seems, from inquiry in all parts of the forest, that there were 764
many different ways of burying the dead and that no uniform custom 768
existed; rather that, as now, each band had its own preferences. The 184
most common method now, and apparently in the past, is simply to pull the hut down over the corpse, the body having been buried in a shallow pit dug in the ground or simply left on the bed, covered with leaves. In some bands the hut is then burned, in others it is left, but the general practice is to move camp at once. If it is too late to move that day, the family concerned will sleep out in the open until they are able to build a new hut in the next camp.

On some occasions bodies are buried up in trees, and in the south- 764
eastern region of net-hunters this is how the Mbuti say they dispose 171 *
of dead lepers. Nearly all Mbuti say that in the old days they buried [184]
their dead in holes in the ground, filling the holes in afterward so [766]
that the animals would not find the bodies. Today it is usual, throughout the forest, to wash the body before disposing of it in any of these ways. But this, and other practices such as scenting the corpse, wrapping it in a cloth if one is available, raising and lowering it three times before burial, and orienting the body in its resting place, vary according to the practices of the local villagers, and are almost certainly to a large extent borrowed from them. The Mbuti seem impatient and unconcerned about such details, and if they attend to them they do so only perfunctorily. They are particularly reluctant to allow anything of any possible value to be buried with a body, and if the burial takes place in a village and the villagers insist on using cloths and sleeping mats, the Mbuti will do their best to retrieve these unseen, at the last moment.

Similarly, head-shaving seems to be of little significance to the 765
Mbuti, though they frequently do shave when a member of the band 302
dies. But, unlike the villagers, they are not consistent in the practice, and they leave their hair lying around where it has fallen to the ground, whereas the villagers are scrupulously careful to collect their own hair cuttings, which they take off into the forest, or to a stream, and secretly hide.

The explanation given for self-mortification is that all the imme- 765
diate family feel responsible, to some extent, for a death in their 152
midst. [761]

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became bitter and went far away until they had killed and eaten some- 462
one. Their bitterness then left them and they returned and the *ofa* 152
ended. The Mbuti archers in this region deny they do this, but agree [771]
that it is a woman's job to wail. A man's job is to hunt. A man will say, "We are glad you are dead, now you can guide us to good hunting." (The Epulu net-hunters claim to say the same thing when the *molimo* is over.) Some Lesé refer to the same custom as *chachima*.

Over to the east, I found that the Plains Bira have a similar custom 765
called *masoso*. Among the Forest Bira it seems to be a part of what 462
they call their *molimo*. Again the women of the family are expected 171
to wail formally and to exact tribute from visitors coming to the village of the deceased. The men argue about problems of inheritance, and conduct the burial and purification rituals.

Among all the villagers it is stressed that any such death ritual con- 765
cerns only the family of the deceased. Whatever other similarities 764
there may be between their practices and those of the Mbuti in this 621 •
connection, a restriction on participation along kinship lines is not 594
one of them. For the Mbuti a death is mourned and grieved by any
who have reason for feeling a personal loss. This means primarily the [561]
immediate family and age mates. These are the people responsible for the disposal of the body, though others will help if help is needed. The band as a whole reacts to the loss however, and it is the responsibility of the band as a whole to celebrate the death in such a way as to restore the normality of life. This is the *molimo*.[5]

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[5] The wider structural significance of the molimo is discussed in the last two chapters, "Principles of Organization."

CHAPTER 10

# The Economy

## THE BAND AS AN ECONOMIC UNIT

621 613 602 We have seen the limited importance of the family in the lineage context, and that the band itself can only be defined, as a persisting entity, in terms of territory. Its composition and size fluctuate in response to a number of factors, among which the current economic context is of undoubted importance, regulating the size to a large extent, but also sometimes affecting the composition. We can clearly say that the band is not a unilineal institution, as seen in our camp plans for both archers and net-hunters, and in many instances even if we consider the band as a bilateral unit, lineage considerations appear to be minimal in determining its composition.

621 439 We now consider the territorial band as an economic unit. When discussing the Mbuti/Villager relationship (p. 33 seq.), we assumed that there was no economic necessity involved in Mbuti dependence on the villagers for plantation foods or village utensils. This is the first point to be considered here, in order to justify our treating the band as an economic unit without reference to village economy.

621 431 261 To begin with, it can be clearly stated that nowhere in the Ituri, except possibly in the triangle bounded by the three roads linking Beni, Irumu and Mambasa, have I ever come across a hunting band suffering from any shortage of forest foods, unless the band was at that time camped near the village. Further, in the heart of the forest I have come across many bands that are too many days away from the nearest village to maintain any kind of supply line, and that have existed solely on forest foods for from three to six months, with ease. It has been obvious, however, that in those bands there was considerable hankering for the luxuries supplied by the village, and there is no doubt that in time these luxuries will become necessities, given a continuation of the situation.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P

The very fact alone that each band has clearly defined boundaries 121 and that each hunting territory borders on two or three others may 621 be taken as an indication of the self-sufficiency of the over-all region 628 and of each territory. Were such fixed and adjacent boundaries to exist with the accepted and generally practiced custom of non-trespass, then where each territory was not self-sufficient trespass or warfare would be bound to occur, and there would have to be some institutionalized manner of dealing with the situation. Mbuti society has no institutional means of dealing with any such situation, nor is there any indication that it ever has had either the institutions or the need for them. The social organization, such as it is, indicates that each band within its territory is to the largest possible extent independent of its neighbors in terms of politics and economics. It might indeed be argued that territorial self-sufficiency, and consequent territorial demarcation, were achieved only with the advent of the village tribes and their plantations. There is, however, not the slightest evidence for this, and the evident abundance of the forest is a strong counterargument.

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At all times of year there is in the forest an abundant supply of 261 mushrooms, roots, berries, nuts and herbs, some fruits and some [222] leafy vegetables. The very fact that the Mbuti exchange meat for [439] plantation foods and villager utensils indicates that there is at least P ample meat for Mbuti needs, with a surplus for trade. And again it is [461] worth noting the fact that the Mbuti themselves equate hunger with noise and laziness, both perfectly rational explanations of poor hunting and gathering.[1] On those rare occasions when the hunting, even far off in the forest, really is poor, it is considered exceptional enough to call out the *molimo* society, normally reserved for death.

As far as items of material culture are concerned, we have probably P 439 indicated sufficiently (p. 33 *seq.*) the extent of Mbuti dependence C upon the village, and the degree of its necessity. It is more significant 439 and telling to look at the structural aspects of the economic relationship. 608 Here we immediately see that the structure is very heavily one-sided. From the village point of view it is perfectly clear-cut, depending on the two alleged institutions of *karé* blood brotherhood and hereditary ownership, although, owing to the constant flux in

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[1] The equation of hunger and death is a common one to the Mbuti, who say "Hunger kills me" instead of "I am hungry." But the symbolism goes deeper, and a surfeit of food is considered the sine qua non of a *molimo* death festival—the primary focus of which is not on death but on the continuity of life. [761]

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439 band composition, these institutions have little direct economic application.
C However, they do serve as a means by which any villager
439 may assert a claim of any Mbuti. Villagers frequently enter into
608 agreements and become involved in disputes with each other as a
result, but nonetheless a villager whose *karé* or hereditary Mbuti is supplying another villager with meat may demand either compensation, a share, or rights to the services of one of his fellow-villager's Mbuti.

P This, however, is still from the villager point of view. From the
439 Mbuti point of view the only relevant factors are strictly economic:
*177 they will exchange meat and their services whenever it suits them, for
whatever goods suit them, with whichever villager suits them. The subsequent complications due to any breach of *karé* or kinship considerations does not affect them in any way. Owing to the variable nature of Mbuti wants and the whimsical nature of his behavior when dealing with villagers, there can be no attempt to establish any kind of equivalent rates of exchange.

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Whereas with the villagers the exchange is institutionalized and
439 integrated with the over-all social structure, with the Mbuti it is not.
• 621 It is in the realm of individual and nonformalized behavior, not even
571 necessarily linking the various members of a nuclear family. Since the
C exchange almost invariably takes place in the village, this may be
[439] taken as an indication of the breakdown of forest bonds among Mbuti
living in a village. This fact is extended when, rarely, a villager visits a forest camp in the hopes of insuring at least an immediate and temporary supply of meat. His very presence, if permitted, changes the context from forest to village, and the hunting band becomes, with respect to the visiting villager, a village band, with corresponding social relations. The Mbuti only permit such visits if it is to their advantage, and even then they conceal with ease the game they catch daily and only give the villager what they wish to give.[2]

P In view of the absence of any necessary dependence of the Mbuti
439 upon the villager, for food or material, and even more in absence of
433 any mutually accepted institutional relationship, we may regard such
184 exchange as takes place with the village as having little or no bearing
224 on the structure of the Mbuti forest economy, and we need consider it

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[2] Villagers consider it perfectly legitimate to cross their own territorial boundaries to
[648] visit any of "their" Mbuti who might be in someone else's village area, providing the
visit is to a forest camp. This is one of several indications that the villagers clearly acknowledge the forest as belonging to the Mbuti; the offering of the firstfruits of a new plantation is another.

no further, except to point again to the obvious potential relationship 439
between hunting technology and village exchange, the net-hunters 224
being more easily able to acquire an excess of meat than the archers. 433
However, it is difficult to ascertain just how far this relationship is 184
effectual, for even the net-hunters maintain minimal exchange with
the villagers, and only on the same nonformalized individual basis.
There is rather more likelihood among the archers for there to exist a [622]
*capita* or *sultani* who will convey to his fellow-Mbuti the wishes of [621]
the villagers although he has no authority to take any other action,
and this may be seen as being due, in part at least, to the less productive
technology of the archers, and in part to the greater prevalence
of fragmentation into small sub-bands.

## DIVISION OF LABOR

There is little to say about the division of labor in Mbuti society, 462
but most important is the fact that there is no religious belief or ritual 222
practice that relates any activity to any one sex, nor is there any consecration 224
of those everyday tasks that normally fall into the jurisdiction
of one sex or the other. This, of course, is what might be expected
from the personal terminology, which differentiates the sexes clearly
only at the parental level. Basically men hunt and make hunting [765]
equipment, and organize the *molimo* festivals. The women gather [881]
vegetable foods and other forest produce, build the huts, prepare and
cook the food; they organize the *elima* festival. Men make bark cloth,
women make baskets. Children take part in all the economic activities.
But women help make the nets, and they invariably make the
twine from which the nets are made. Among the net-hunters the
women, girls and young children act as beaters and are thus an integral
part of the hunt, as they are among the archers in the archer *begbe*
hunt. Men of both archer and net-hunter bands have no hesitation
in gathering mushrooms and other vegetable foods when they have
the opportunity. In both groups it is primarily and almost exclusively
the men who gather the honey, for women seldom climb trees.

Women take part in the *molimo* and, although it is a small part, it 562
is a highly significant one. The *elima*, though organized by the women [765]
and stemming from the maturation of a girl, is of equal importance to [881]
the male youths who play a vital role in the festival. All in all, sex does
not seem to be of any particular significance in determining the structure [433]
of Mbuti economic activity. Of far greater significance is age, 561
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death, will be kept well clear of the forest, whose malign influence 798
could adversely affect the outcome of the crisis. 171 *

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While the net-hunt divides the band into nuclear-family units in- 778
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sofar as each net clearly belongs to a nuclear family, there is no par- 224
ticular order for setting out on the hunt. Nuclear families may split [624] •
up right at the beginning, children joining their age mates, women [594]
going off together, the menfolk forming clusters of friends or broth- [422]
ers, in much the order in which they will hunt. It is always decided the night before, by common discussion and consent, where the hunt is to take place, and everyone makes his way there of his own accord, generally passing by the hunting fire on the way. On arrival the women will already be mostly separated from the men, and invisibly take up their stations while the men silently stretch their nets out through the undergrowth, supporting them on the foliage, the ends of each net being tied to those on either side of it.

The hunters generally take up their stand near the center of their net, but the practice varies according to their relationship with their hunting neighbors, and also according to whether they have any sons with them at the net. When the extremes are ready (the setting up begins in the middle of the semicircle) a signal is given to the women, who immediately start closing in from their opposing semicircle, beating the ground with branches, shouting, yelling and hooting. The men remain concealed until the very last moment. They always lie in wait behind the nets, and will only cross into the circle to go to someone's assistance when game is caught. Game is not generally shot at or speared until it is in the net or until it shows signs of escaping.
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It is then that the Mbuti must know the likely whereabouts of all his [278]
fellows, as the strophanthus poison used most widely is as deadly to human beings as to animals.[8]

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Once an animal is killed, and each cast of the nets may bring in sev- 224
eral animals, it is taken by the wife of the lucky net-owner and put 482
into her carrying basket, to be shared out on return to the camp. If [462]
the animal is a large one, and too heavy to put in a basket, either one

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[8] When the poison is prepared, one test for its strength is to make a slight cut in the forearm and to allow the blood to trickle down for an inch. The poisoned wooden tip of an arrow is then touched to the blood below the wound. If, as the Mbuti say, the poison "walks up the arm," they claim to feel a tickling sensation and hurriedly wipe the blood away. If the poison does not "walk up the arm" it is not strong enough. So wary are the Mbuti of poisoned arrows that they carry them thoroughly sheathed in a bundle of leaves, in case they accidentally scratch themselves. Also, when they have fired and lost a poisoned arrow, they may spend a considerable time trying to find it rather than leave it as a possible danger to other hunters.

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| *Area* | *Portion of body* | *Given to* |
|---|---|---|
| Nduye | Head | Women |
| | Back and legs | Shared all around |
| | Private parts | Dog-owner (who will give them to the dog) |
| | Intestines | Shared all around |
| | Stomach | Elders |
| Biasa | Head | Owner of dog |
| | Chest and legs | Shared all around |
| | Back | Dog-owner |
| | Private parts | Children and elders |
| | Stomach | Elders |

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[562]
It will be seen that the only element the various systems have in common is in the selection of certain categories of people. Women are separated from the men among all three net-hunting bands and one archer band. The net-owner corresponds to the archer dog-owner. Elders are singled out everywhere except at Biasiku, where the hunters said they would be obliged to give the elders whatever they wanted. Children figure in two net-hunting bands, and only in one archer band, where they are coupled with elders.

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The only kinship relations specified are "sister and sister-in-law," which can perhaps be better interpeted simply as "women," among the Wamba net-hunters, and "dog-owner's father" at the Kilo archer camp, where the hunters were insistent that the rump would be given to the father, if alive, for him to divide among the other elders as he thought fit. In practice, however, sometimes using a village system of kinship obligations, the Mbuti men and women will make claims on grounds of kinship. In any case, as stated, the actual sharing generally is accomplished to suit the needs of the moment rather than to satisfy any system, stated or otherwise.

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The net-hunt can then be seen not only as a determining factor on the size of the band but also as a major mechanism for insuring cooperation of band members, and for allowing daily expression of internal hostilities and providing for their resolution through the highly fluid "system" of sharing. While the net-hunt expresses the importance of the nuclear family in that the nuclear family is the basic hunting unit (the father owning the net, the mother beating toward

it, the children standing guard at the net or at the fringes of the hunt), 224
nonetheless the nuclear family is divided in the hunt, and both men 621 •
and women are forced to co-operate with their neighbors, who may 626
or may not be kin. The hunt above all is not an individual affair but 594
involves the band as a whole, as is borne out in the ultimate disposition of the spoils.

That the net-hunt is regarded as a matter of importance to the for- 224
est, regarding the forest in a religious sense, is evidenced by the hunt- 778
ing fire, the song and the dance, rather than by any elaborate ritual,
purification, or sexual taboo. The close relationship between the [304]
hunt as an economic activity and the hunt as a religious act is seen in
the widespread custom of rubbing ashes from charred forest woods
into the skin sometimes slitting the skin first to achieve permanent
tattoo marks. This is stated to secure the protection of the forest.

Whereas I was never able to secure confirmation of Schebesta's de- 224
scription of food offerings being made to the forest, except through 825
villager informants, there is very definitely a strongly felt and stated 152
urge to use every part of the animal, and never to kill more than is [114]
necessary for the band's needs for the day. This in fact may be one [782]
reason why the Mbuti are so reluctant to kill an excess of game and preserve it for exchange with the villagers. There is no expression of joy in the capturing and killing of an animal, though the excitement still runs strongly. The moment of killing is best described as a moment of intense compassion and reverence. The fun that is sometimes subsequently made of the dead animal, particularly by the youths, appears to be almost a nervous reaction, and there is an element of fear in their behavior. On the other hand, a bird caught alive may deliberately be toyed with, its feathers singed off over the fire while it is still fluttering and squawking until it is finally burned or suffocated to death. This again is usually done by youths who take the same nervous pleasure in the act; very rarely a young hunter may absentmindedly do the same thing. Older hunters and elders generally disapprove, but do not interfere.

The respect seems to be not for animal life but for the game as a 224
gift of the forest, and a gift that may be withheld if abused by waste.
It is further considered that good hunting is essential to the success [881]
of either an *eima* or a *molimo* festival, and during such festivals cer- [765]
tain hunts are devoted expressly to supplying the festival with food.

Among the archers, the system of sharing game and the respect for 224
game are comparable in their political and religious connotations: 621

224 magic seems to be somewhat more prevalent. Further, although
621 archery does not demand a relatively large co-operative band as does
[221] net-hunting, and although for most of the year the archers seem to
be split into small bands of maybe only three or so nuclear families, the band is actually comparable in size and composition, and manifests its unity once a year for the annual *begbe* beat-hunt.

The *begbe* is remarkably like the net-hunt in technique and in social function. The major difference is the absence of nets, which makes for a much smaller circle for the same number of participants. Seven nuclear families could successfully hunt with nets; they could never form a *begbe* hunt. By the same token, more than thirty families could easily participate in *begbe* without inconvenience or danger, and if we define the archer band by stated territorial boundaries, and consider its composition as consisting of those who hunt within those boundaries during the year and form the communal *begbe* hunt once a year, then the average size of the archer band is probably larger than that of the net-hunting band.

The *begbe* demands large numbers; the men form a tight semicircle, each man well within sight of the next, the women and children forming a similarly tight semicircle opposite. The men are armed with bows and arrows, and with spears; the women make petards, which when beaten on the ground make a sharp, explosive sound. When the circle is complete, the women beat toward the men, who try to kill the animals before they break through their ranks, a procedure that is considerably more hazardous than the net-hunt, where the hunters can afford to wait until the game is at least temporarily held up by the net.

224 Among the archers the *begbe* is referred to as the beginning of the
221 new year, and the hunt coincides, it seems, with the honey season,
621 which for the net-hunters is similarly the beginning, or the end, of
the year. During this season, then, the archer band is consolidated and co-operative, though it seldom builds a single camp. Rather, there may be from three to five large camps, but built close to each other (within earshot) and connected by trails. This, however, is the one time of year when the band does meet and hunt as such, though even at this time there is no central authority.

621 For the rest of the year the band is broken up into smaller units,
221 each one economically and politically independent of the other. These
sections may vary in size from two or three nuclear families to as many as ten, or temporarily even a few more. Generally an archer camp contains from three to six families.

contains from three to six families. In the same way that among the 621
net-hunters the smaller camps built during the honey season show 221
rather more evidence of patrilineal bonds, so do the smaller archer 602
camps. They are still by no means exclusively patrilineal-patrilocal 613
units however, and although respect is paid to the lineage head, it is
no more than would be paid to any elder. Indeed, even the small
camps are frequently composite to an extent that lineal authority
would be unworkable. As we shall see for the net-hunters, authority
is widely dispersed through the different age groups, for different ac-
tivities.

The archers make use of the dog to a far greater extent than do the 224
net-hunters, who only use it incidentally (particularly elders who go
off on their own with bow and arrows). The common practice is for
three or so hunters to lie in wait, possibly concealed up in trees, near
an animal trail. They will entice game with antelope calls, and shoot
at it when it has come between them. Dogs are used more by single
men or men hunting in pairs, who prefer to track rather than to am- [462]
bush. Women do not participate in the hunt, and go off on their own, [222]
but never singly, to gather.

If one such minimal section of the band is not having successful 224
hunting or gathering, its first step will be, as with any hunting camp, 621
to abandon the site and move elsewhere. However, with the territory 166
split up among a number of similar sections, the freedom of choice
is not as great as among the net-hunters, where the band is encamped
as a single unit and may move anywhere else within the territory
without hindrance. Consequently one section may join temporarily 224
with another. Alternatively, it may send to another and ask for a share 166
of their spoils. Generally, however, contact between one section and 621
another is more for purposes of socialization, as the forest is no less 628
abundant here than in the region of the net-hunters, and the same [461]
axiom holds good—a hungry camp is a lazy camp.

Each section is free to move where it will and cannot claim any right to any particular subterritory, and although it happens, it is considered bad form to camp too close to another section without asking permission simply because they have found good hunting. It frequently happens that hunters from different sections find themselves hunting in the same area between their two camps, and in that case they either separate or else they join up, depending on the nature of the game present.

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The presence of elephants may be made an occasion for two or more 825

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Congo - Kinshasa F01

P
224 sections to join together temporarily, and the archers share the same
628 two techniques of elephant hunting that are used by the net-hunters.
825 Some hunters like to make a kill on their own, not so much to gain
[554] status, for such status is virtually meaningless, but for personal satisfaction. They will trail an elephant, then run up underneath it and jab their spear several times into its belly, aiming at the bladder. If they see urine spurt out they know the elephant will die in a day or so, and they will return to their camp, which will pack up and trail the dying elephant and build a new camp around it.

Alternatively, four or five Mbuti will lie in wait, and when an elephant appears one will stand out on the trail in front of it so that it stops. At that moment one who is concealed behind will run out and slice the tendon of one of the rear heels. The elephant will spin around, partially immobilized, whereupon another concealed strategically will run out and slice the other tendon. The elephant can then be killed at leisure, though still not with ease.

The killing of an elephant will inevitably bring other sections of
P
the band to the scene, and the meat will be shared among all. The mo-
[221] ment it is finished, however, the band will again split up and remain
this way for the rest of the year. Thus the *begbe*, during the honey season, remains the only time when the band assembles as such for the purposes of acting together as an economic unit. It is unlikely that more than one elephant will be killed during the year; the maximum
I know of in one territory is three, and this was considered highly
P
exceptional. Further, although elephant hunting may result in the
• [621] assembly of a number of sections, or even of the total band, it does
not involve communal activity.

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Neither the archers nor the net-hunters, despite the abundance of
224 wildlife around them, acknowledge many totemic restrictions, though
613 they could well do so without suffering. But the very abundance also
614 renders it unnecessary to have institutionalized methods of insuring
C even distribution. Among the villagers, whose supply of meat depends
[613] almost entirely on the Mbuti and is consequently unpredictable and
[614] erratic, totemic observances are common and rigidly enforced, and can
[439] be seen to affect distribution to some extent, as the totemic animals
include those most frequently caught.

P
Such totemic observances among the Mbuti that do not derive
224 from individual allergies are associated with membership in the
613 patrilineal lineage. The animals so respected are without exception
614 those least frequently killed, hunted or eaten. By far the most wide-
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825

222 533 181 [771] [776] and since the forest is benevolent the songs thus are thought to secure protection. In point of fact they do, for the throaty chorus of even two or three Mbuti women is enough to scare away any game. When not singing the women beat their hands together, shout or talk loudly to each other, for the same purpose. I know of only one woman injured while gathering. She was alone, which was the first mistake, and the first question asked when news came back to camp that she had been attacked by a buffalo was the apparently surprising one, "Was she not singing?" She was not, nor was she "talking to the forest," and that was her second mistake, the consequence of which was death. The Mbuti are practical enough to recognize the "noise" value of song, but they see more in it than that.

262 When the Mbuti are near a source of plantation foods and can acquire them by one means or another, then their daily diet is largely vegetable. The meal taken before going hunting and the snack on the hunt are both likely to be entirely vegetarian, meat being eaten only at the evening meal. Even then it may be served with one or another [222] vegetable. Even when the Mbuti are far away from a supply of village foods and living entirely on the forest they still rely heavily on vegetable foods, and gathering must be considered at least equally important with hunting as a subsistence activity. From what I was able to see, this is true among the archers as well as among the net-hunters. It is also true that throughout the forest the supply of forest vegetable foods, though varying, is constant and sufficient, frequently ample. If there is any time when there is a greater abundance than at other times, it is during the honey season.

## HONEY

221 222 Falling approximately in the middle of our calendar year, and lasting a full two months, the honey season is of vital importance to the Mbuti not only from a nutritional point of view but structurally. • [621] [578] We have already seen how at this time the net-hunting bands split up into minimal sections, separating hostile or factious elements and consolidating existing friendships, so that when the band re-forms it will have resolved most of the internal dissensions built up over the previous year, on the whole reaffirming old loyalties but always asserting some that are new. The archer band, normally segmented, joins together during the honey season in what is essentially the same process. It is significant that the honey season should be marked

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which should be mentioned here, though it seems unique and known only to net-hunters as far as I could ascertain. The ritual involves the building of a fire, with much greater care and concern than the hunting fire or the *molimo* fire, and it is believed specifically that the correct performance of this ritual will lead the Mbuti to honey and/or bring the bees, and their honey, closer to the Mbuti. A full description is given in the section on religion and magic (pp. 231–33). Here it need only be said that the preparations, including the digging of small trenches for water and the use of special woods and leaves, are designed to give the maximum amount of smoke. The lighting of the fire is accompanied by blowing on the *madé** (efe: *segbe*) whistles, through which water is first poured. 222 372 789 796 [184] [534]

All being taken into consideration, the relative lack of magic or ritual associated with food quest, the lack of interest shown in certain readily available forms of food supply such as fish, and the lack of food taboos all confirm the abundance of forest foods and the adequacy of Mbuti technology. This is important in considering the over-all economic system. 105 22 262

## ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF TERRITORY

While the environment does not, through areas of shortage or abundance, determine the location of hunting bands, it does provide natural boundaries which form convenient borders between each hunting band. The total territory is more than ample for the total population, and the even distribution of game and vegetable foods means that there are no preferential areas that might make for rivalry between one band and the next. There is, in any case, a safety factor in that the bands are arranged side by side, in several vast circles, in the center of each of which the boundaries are so loosely drawn that there is effectively a no-man's-land, in which anyone may hunt and where bands occasionally, though rarely, may come in contact with each other. 131 621 • 628

The only territory to be considered, then, is that of the individual hunting band. This is again, in all cases except possibly the area

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* The *madé* is a conical pipe, open at both ends, made of two hollowed-out cross-sections cut lengthwise, bound together either by *nkusa* twine or by strips of vine. The pouring of water, which is comparable to the pouring of water through the *molimo* trumpet (see Chapter 14) may have ritual significance, but is explained invariably and unhesitatingly as being necessary simply to get a better sound. It swells the wood and binds the sections closer to each other.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

131 621 628 bounded by Beni, Mambasa, and Irumu, more than sufficient for the economic needs of any band, however large. The size of the band is determined more by hunting technology than by territorial food-producing capacity, but each territory does provide, within itself, a means of regulating the internal movement of the band or its subsections.

621 224 166 131 Game, while not migratory in the wider sense, nonetheless tends to move about from one part of the forest to another nearby part, as it temporarily exhausts one area of supply after another. The game itself is in this respect comparable to the band, which similarly is forced to move, not only as it gathers out an area but also as it hunts it out. The same topographical barriers that provide natural boundaries to the Mbuti also often provide natural boundaries to the game, and so in any one hunting territory there is a definite pattern to the movement of both Mbuti and game, the one following the other. The Mbuti may break the pattern either by eating village foods or by abandoning one section of their territory for another, for there may be several "game territories" within one hunting territory.

621 131 There are then general economic aspects of territory that influence the movement and division of the hunting band, but they in no way compel it into one specific pattern or another. Far more important is the simple fact of the ample economic self-sufficiency of each hunting territory, and the fact that this is a factor recognized, appreciated and utilized by the Mbuti.

628 224 131

## ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HUNTING BANDS

It is only extremely rarely that one band has any kind of economic relationship with its neighbors, and the nature of the relationship depends entirely on the context. As already observed, while there is a recognized custom of not crossing into another band's territory, this may be done if that band is nowhere in the vicinity. The likelihood of this happening depends on the nature of the boundary (how easily it may be traversed) and the nature of the quarry. It is unlikely that any but the most desirable game would be pursued. If such game is caught, however, then a share of it is due to the band in whose territory it was killed. While it would be unusual for one band to inform another of such good fortune, if discovered there is no hesitation at sharing in the prescribed way.

The movement of bees seems to be somewhat less even than that of 628
game in the Ituri Forest, and it sometimes happens during the honey 222
season that one hunting territory may have a glut of honey while a 131
neighboring territory has a scarcity. In that case the less fortunate band will either poach, and hope not to get caught and so have to share, or else it will ask permission to camp on foreign territory. In the latter case there will probably be an exchange of residents between the two bands, the host band thus being able to insure its rights. (As [621]
often as not, due to the composite nature of the bands, the en- [602]
croaching band will have among its female or even its male members a relative, if not an original member, of the resident band. However, the loyalty of such individuals is divided, and is generally given to their present hunting band; otherwise undiscovered poaching would be impossible.)

The camps are generally as far apart as possible, unless the en- 621
croaching band is small, or a mere subsection that is tentatively seek- 628
ing a re-alignment with the resident band. Similarly with hunting, 224
joint hunting camps are exceptional, and to my own knowledge oc- 476
cur only if there is a common desire to hunt elephants which may be in one or both territories. The purpose of such joint hunts generally [439]
involves village economics, in particular the supply of ivory to the villagers. In itself elephant-hunting demands only a handful of men at the most, and more than one dead elephant would be an *embarras de richesses*, to say the least.

It is not surprising, then, that there are no institutionalized means 438
of regulating economic relationships between bands. Such co-opera- 628
tion as does occur is completely outside the normal economic frame of reference. There is certainly no exchange of goods or food between bands, except insofar as a visiting family generally brings with it some meat, honey, nuts or mushrooms to share with their hosts. Each territory not only provides a sufficiency of food but an equally ample sufficiency of all the other material necessities of life.

The only true economic relationship that persists between bands 621
is concerned with maintaining each territorial band at its optimum 628
economic strength of composition. The overenlargement of one band and the diminution of another leads to a relocation of some of the families of the larger band in the territory of the smaller. Owing to the constant flux in composition, however, this is only a temporary relationship between two temporary populations, and does not in-

• 621 628 volve any reciprocal rights or obligations, the increased efficiency of each band being the reward of each.

P 439 621

## ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BAND AND VILLAGE

121 C 439 621 121 C [611] [591]

This has already been dealt with to some extent, and has been seen to involve a question of mutual convenience rather than of economic necessity. What needs to be emphasized, perhaps, is that there can in effect be an effective economic relationship only between a territorial band and a territorial village, without regard to the composition of either. The territorial village is likely to be far more consistent in composition, moving less frequently, less far and less at random than the band, and above all following a clearly patrilineal/patrilocal system of descent and marriage. Any village, then, may be said to be in an economic relationship with any hunting band whose territory includes that village. In addition, it may have a relationship with other bands whose territories are sufficiently close to allow easy exchange.

P 439 621 608 571

The band is similarly in relationship with a village or villages according to territorial considerations. Within that band each individual will also have personal-exchange relationships with his villager *karé* brother, with his *kpara*, and with any other individual villager in the local village if neither his *karé* nor his *kpara* are there. He may maintain any, all or none of these individual relationships as it pleases him; there is no institutional means of compelling him one way or the other from either the band or the village. He decides entirely in terms of his own needs, those of his family and the general needs of the band. If he finds himself in conflict with the band then he either forms a subsection with two or three others or he goes to visit another band. Generally, however, a band tolerates complete individualism in this respect. The obligation to share, however, does not apply to village foods. Any Mbuti who does not enter into an exchange relationship with a villager, or who does not steal what he wants, goes without unless his relatives or friends voluntarily offer him of their own.

P [156]

P 439 608 571

The decision of the individual Mbuti often shows rather more forethought than is shown or called for in his other economic activities. The probable length of absence of or from his *karé* or *kpara* is taken into consideration. If an Mbuti has a particularly generous exchange partner, he will, in that partner's absence, maintain at least nominal

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exchange with his partner's next of kin. If his partner is within a day's 439
walk or two he may visit him briefly, bringing a suitable gift of meat 608
with him. Even on returning to his *kpara's* village, an Mbuti may 571
maintain exchange with a generous villager elsewhere.

There is no system of equivalents, only the obligation to reciprocate. P
Indeed it is doubtful if we can really even talk of it as theft when the 439
Mbuti raid a plantation and carry off what they want, back to the 579 648
forest, without leaving anything for the villagers, whom they may or C
may not even know. The villagers recognize their need of the Mbuti 439
if they are to be spared the necessity of going into the forest them- 829
selves. They also recognize that the territory, even that on which the 648
village and plantation are built, was formerly, and in a sense still is,
all Mbuti territory, and that they therefore have special privileges.
When a raid takes place, the established villagers assume that a re-
ciprocal presentation of forest foods, other forest products, or of ser-
vice will be made at a future date.

On the village side, *karé* and *kpara* relationships may well operate C 608
and persist over long periods of time if the individuals are wise and 571
just. If they are not, then the same relationships, in village society, [626]
afford an institutional means of regulating the situation with any
other villagers with whom the Mbuti may take up. Among the Mbuti
no such considerations or mechanisms pertain.

In the latter days of Belgian administration, when increasing de- C
mands were made upon the villagers to produce certain cash crops 177
and to supply labor, the villagers found themselves in correspondingly 464
greater need of Mbuti labor to help them with their plantation work. 241
Demands would be made of a whole band to come and camp near the 563 648
plantation for several weeks on end, to help with the sowing or the P
harvesting. The demand would be made by the village chief or head- 648
man to the appointed "*capita*" or "*sultani*"[5] of the Mbuti band. Once 621
notified, the band then decided the matter by common discussion, 571
any dissenters being free to leave and go their own way without any 464
attached stigma. The considerations involved in arriving at a decision
were entirely practical and material, and a decision always stood ready
to be reversed at a moment's notice if it was found not to be in the
favor of the band.

The work entailed on the plantation in no way involved groups P 177*
comparable to those formed in hunting or gathering activities; con- 571
sequently in the village a different set of interpersonal relationships

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[5] These terms derive from the Belgians and the Arab slave traders, respectively.

*177 exists among the Mbuti, and mutual obligations that exist in the for-
571 est are no longer practicable and so are no longer considered as bind-
[439] ing. Generally there is a fractioning into individual family or even
smaller elements, each individual or family having a villager exchange
*177 partner. However, some villagers with larger and more productive
571 plantations, or with other assets (such as the blacksmith), may at-
476 tract a number of Mbuti who thus form a temporary co-operative group while in the village. Any such bonds formed are purely of the moment and in that context, and are shed immediately on return to
*177 the forest. For the moment, however, they are real and binding, falling
627 under village sanctions and even to some extent subject to village
648 jurisdiction. To this latter, however, the Mbuti only submit so far as it is convenient. In a case of inter-Mbuti dispute in the village context, the litigants are likely, for personal and individual reasons, to accept villager arbitration. In the case of a dispute between an Mbuti and a villager, however, it will be the convenience of the band that is considered as well as that of the individual.

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## ECONOMIC AUTHORITY

• 621 Such organization as exists for economic purposes arises in direct
121 response to the immediate demands of the present context. It is constant only as long as the context is constant, and any continuity derives from contextual continuity, not from any hardening of traditional arteries or inherited patterns of leadership or behavior. The only structural aspects of the economy that persist in other realms are those related to the principles of territory and age.

121 Ecological and technological considerations determine the general
433 pattern of subsistence activities, hunting and gathering; this pattern
439 is modified according to the desire of the Mbuti for village luxuries
*177 or to the pressure put upon them by their villager neighbors. As any of these considerations changes, so does the pattern. There is no attempt to control or dominate either the geographical or human environment.

571 Insofar as organization is in the nature of a response, then, leader-
121 ship is minimal, in the economic realm. All major decisions are taken
621 by common consent, as in other realms of Mbuti life. Men and
554 women have equal say, hunting and gathering being equally impor-
[476] tant to the economy. Young married couples and youths have the most to say, being the most active hunters and gatherers, but while ability as a hunter carries some weight, too much ability may lead to

ridicule. That is, a man who displays himself as a great hunter, and 571 121
boasts of his achievements too loudly, is somewhat distrusted, and 621 •
any attempt on his part to use his reputation to gain more say than 554
others will lead immediately to ridicule.

One other consideration determines the extent of influence of a 571
man or woman in economic matters, and that is their knowledge of 554
the territory. Thus, no matter how deserving of respect as hunters, a
visiting Mbuti family who do not know the territory well will have
little to say regardless of their kinship, age or other considerations.
They will nonetheless be expected to take part in discussions.

It is not possible to talk of organization of economic relations with 621
other bands, for such relationships are so rare and diverse. And insofar 439
as the exchange relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers is an [438]
individual one, there is little call for organization or leadership there [628]
either. When there is call for a joint decision concerning the village, [571]
even if it does not directly concern hunting and gathering but, say,
the desire of the villagers for entertainment for a wedding feast, or for
harvest labor in the plantations, it is still treated by the Mbuti as a
hunting issue and it is the same people, the younger married couples,
who have the most say. It is made clear in Mbuti discussions con- 621
cerning a projected move to a village camp that, for them, the village 166
is regarded as another hunting ground. A move villageward of the
whole band is to be considered in terms of the amount of energy and
the nature of the effort to be expended, and of the consequent, pro-
spective rewards.

The same pattern of organization and leadership pertains only in 621
the making of the decision, however. From the moment of arrival
in the village, the band ceases to operate as such and will only as-
semble for general discussion, in the forest manner, when contem-
plating a return to the forest, or if it is deemed profitable to organize
a hunt for the specific intent of securing meat for the villagers.

It is only in the village, then, that the nuclear family can really 621
be considered as a separate economic identity (this is particularly 594
true of the net-hunters, rather less so for the archers). In the realm
of forest subsistence the individual and the family are subordinated
to the band or, perhaps better, become immersed in the band, for
they almost lose their identity. Family membership is of no conse-
quence in determining economic responsibility; age and territoriality
are the more important factors. Any tendency toward charismatic 554
leadership is countered by ridicule, and any persistence on the part of 157
the hunter may lead to his being given the job of representing the

554 band to the village as its *capita* or *sultani*. In the Epulu band, Njobo
157 was an undisputed great hunter, knew the territory as well as anyone
554 and had killed four elephants single-handed. He was a good enough
157 Mbuti not to attempt to dominate any hunting discussion in the
156 forest, merely to take a normal part. If he ever appeared to be overly
571 aggressive or insistent he was shouted down and ridiculed, although
highly popular. He was also the one chosen to represent the band to
[578] the villagers. Ekianga, on the other hand, was less generally popular
and was the source of some friction, having three wives (one the sister of another prominent member of the band), but he was a fine hunter, endowed with exceptional physical stamina, and he too knew the territory well. Even at the height of his unpopularity he was one of the most effective "leaders" of the hunt. So was Nikiabo, a youth who had achieved some notoriety by killing a buffalo when barely out of childhood. Although a bachelor, he had a net of his own and took a prominent part in all hunting discussions. Makubasi, a young married hunter, was also accorded special respect because of his hunting prowess and his physical strength, combined with his knowledge of the territory. But while these four can be singled out as exceptional, they could either separately or together be outvoted by the rest of the hunters. On such occasions they were compelled either to give their assent to the popular decision or to refrain from joining the hunt that day. None of them had the slightest authority over any others. Nor was any moral pressure brought to bear in influencing a decision through personal considerations or respect. The only such moral con-
621 sideration ever mentioned was that when the band arrived at a de-
571 cision, it was considered "good," and that it would "please the forest."
778 Anyone not associating himself with the decision was, then, likely to
displease the forest, and this was considered "bad." Any individual intent on strengthening his own argument might appeal to the forest on grounds that his point of view was "good" and "pleasing"; only the ultimate general decision, however, would determine the validity of his claim.

Finally, it has to be pointed out that while the forest is appealed to almost as an arbiter, and is considered as imposing the standards and even the leadership, which all Mbuti follow, this only holds good in the forest, where the forest directly "feeds its children." Once in the
[183] village, actions concerning the village are never judged by whether or
not they are pleasing to the forest; a totally different set of values
*[177] pertains.

[P.181]

CHAPTER 11

# Government: Internal

## INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Before attempting to understand the over-all system of government 621
in Mbuti society, it is necessary to distinguish between different fields 121
of authority, for each field of activity has its own leaders, drawn from 571
a particular segment of the community. It is in this way that authority 554
is dispersed throughout the band; every adult is accorded special respect
in one field or another, but none can claim respect in all fields.
Individual authority is unthinkable, and not only are there no chiefs [622]
or headmen in Mbuti society; there are not even any councils of [623]
elders or any ritual specialists such as prophets or diviners. Such [791]
adults as have respect in any particular field at any particular moment
do not even have any authority; they can merely claim to be heard.
Their decision is likely to be given general assent and, as in economic
matters, that decision is then said to be "good," and "pleasing" to
the forest. The forest personified as a benevolent divinity remains 778
as the only recognized authority, one which sometimes expresses its 571
feelings with unmistakable clarity; an excessive storm, falling trees, 787
poor hunting and ill health may all be taken as signs of displeasure,
while good weather and good health and good hunting are indications
that all is well. But often the forest remains silent. Then the
Mbuti have to sound its feelings out through discussion. Dreams
may be taken into account, but there is no question of waiting for
visible signs of the forest's pleasure. The delegation of authority is 778
clear; the decision of the whole band, the very fact of unanimity, 571
is sufficient sign of the favor of the forest. There is always diversity [829]
of opinion, freely expressed, but prolonged disagreement is considered [192]
as "noise," and offensive to the forest. Unanimity, therefore, is
a powerful and positive value, equated with the opposite to noise—
quiet, or *ekimi.*

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554 renown, the man with a troublesome trio of wives, himself a frequent
558 cause of friction in the camp. Shaking his finger at Ekianga, Moké
627 said, "And that is a man, completely clean. He pleases my spirit
201 [*roho*] very much."

After the evening meal Moké stood in the middle of the camp and pointed to the hearth of each great hunter and male elder in turn, naming them, and saying, "This is my man, this is my hearth, for it is his hearth; but it is not Asuku's." He even pointed over to Cephu's camp, and included Cephu. He then went back to his hut, leaving Asuku at the central fire with two elders.

Despite this display of disaffection, however, Asuku remained on. He had not only been pointed at, but named in public, and another had been named as good while he had been named as bad—a double disgrace. Ridicule, after this, was pointless, and although everyone wanted to be rid of Asuku, their respect for Njobo, coupled with Njobo's continued absence, prevented them from doing more than ignoring the offender as far as possible. After some three months,
156 however, Asuku began to frequent the village for long periods. Al-
627 though this meant he was at least not in the camp, which was thereby
• 621 much improved, the hunters found this the ultimate insult and dis-
648 loyalty. When he refused a summons to return to the hunting camp,
554 old Moké once again stood in midcamp, an honored position from which any Mbuti, young or old, is free to claim the attention of everyone. He said that since now Asuku had become a villager, he was no longer an Mbuti, no longer "ours"; he belonged far away, very far away indeed. Pointing to the central fire in the section of the camp that included Njobo's wife and three great hunters, and divers others both related and unrelated, he said, "This is a matter of the forest. This is our hearth. It is Njobo's hearth. It is not Asuku's hearth. He belongs in the village or completely and absolutely far away."

156 There were murmurs of assent from everyone, and Moké looked
627 around to each individual hearth, asking, "Is my spirit [*roho*] right?" Agreement was unanimous, though subdued, and Moké simply said, "*Asi-to*"—"It is finished." The next day word was sent by a youth to
[202] Asuku's father, in the territory of Effundi Somali, a few miles on the far side of the Epulu. I was told that the youth simply gave a verbatim account of what had happened. Asuku never returned to the Epulu band, and left the village, returning to his father's territory.

156 His cousin, Mbaaka, was not such a stranger in the band, but soon
554 after his marriage, and some six months after the Asuku episode, he
578
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627 sidered "pleasing to the forest." Asuku had placed himself, physically
[778] and morally, beyond the forest.
[156]

In the two instances cited so far, although the kin relationship of
602 Asuku and Mbaaka to Njobo was the source of their claim to special
604 privileges, this was recognized as a village attitude, and a valid vil-
554 lage argument. It is noteworthy that the details of the relationship were never spelled out once, except by Asuku and Mbaaka. The attitude of all the Mbuti was one of respect for Njobo, but of equal recognition of all those who shared the same central hearth, including some who were not even affines. It was stated very clearly by Moké
[621] that though Asuku was a member of the band by virtue of having shared the same hearth, he had no more privileges than anyone else of that hearth, and was under the same obligations of respect and responsibility to his elders.

554 There was one other elder who could claim the same respect as
602 Moké, by reason of age, and that was Tungana. But Moké had the added advantages of being a widower and virtually unrelated to any-
[608] one in the band. He claimed fictitious relationship with Tungana, it being said that the same foster mother fed them both, and he frequently gave Tungana's "clan" name as being his own. Clan names
[614] were seldom mentioned in disputes, except in a village context, and even then they in fact referred to a unit that was either nonlineal or cognatic, and not confined to one clan. Rather than differentiate be-
[621] tween lineal units, the Mbuti used the concept of the hearth (*kuma*).
[354] Each family had its own hearth, but there were also several central hearths, each shared by a number of families.

602 Each camp, except the smallest, was distinguished by several such
621 central hearths, effectively breaking the camp into subcamps that
[354] usually revealed a line of fission or fusion, but which frequently ran counter to all kinship considerations. As far as the Epulu band was concerned (and I believe this to be true of many other bands), authority was again, as with other aspects of life, more associated with age and territory than with kinship. Each section of the camp was,
621 in a limited sense, a political unit, and sometimes disputes would
578 remain confined to one section without spreading to others. A man
626 could invoke kinship or friendship to go to the aid of a disputant in another section, if he wished, but somebody like Moké was even more free to wander wherever he liked. The rules of self-help among
[152] the Mbuti are quite simple. It is perfectly proper to hit someone with anything wooden; it is not at all proper to draw blood, nor to hit any-

one on the forehead, which is considered a dangerous spot. In the 621
frequent marital disputes, any man who hits his wife on the head or 578
in the face promptly loses any sympathy he might have had from his 626
fellows. A dispute that follows such lines almost invariably ends [593]
with an elder, male or female, physically interposing himself between [522]
the disputants, who then revert to hurling abuse which becomes more
and more exaggerated until it is so humorous that even they join in
the laughter. Alternatively they may lapse into a sulk, which will last
for the rest of the day and through the evening, but will be gone in
ample time for the next day's hunt to take place as though nothing
had happened.

If a dispute becomes widened in scope, however (and this is gen- 578
erally achieved by one of the disputants naming someone, either in 621
his own support or as a supporter of his antagonist), it will ultimately 626
involve the entire subsection of the camp, and quite possibly the
whole camp. In either case the process is the same. Whatever the
cause of the dispute, it is still regarded as essentially the concern of
the individuals concerned. Rather than attempt a probably impos-
sible reconciliation of the excited participants, the rest of the band
joins in an effort to divert attention away from the actual cause of
the dispute. If this fails, they attempt to dissipate the blame by rais-
ing all sorts of minor but associated disputes, so that a number of
people become involved. If blame still seems inescapable, the camp [522]
clown is likely to try and take it on himself, or else it will be put upon
him by the others. The disputants, in my experience, accept this de-
vice as a genuine solution. There is no attempt whatsoever, nor have
I heard of it in other bands, to make any restitution other than
verbal.

As already mentioned, a dispute may be stopped simply by making life intolerable for the disputants by miming them and throwing them into ridicule. If these measures fail and the dispute persists, the hunting automatically suffers, and if no reconciliation is effected, the band splits, either forming two subsections or remaining as a single band, with the splinter section joining another band, at least temporarily.

Not only is the attachment of blame avoided or dissipated as rig- 627
orously as possible, and restitution largely ignored, but punishment
is almost completely unknown. There are one or two instances where
a youth might be thrashed by communal decision, but they are rare
and foreign to Mbuti nature. Closer to an indigenous system of pun-

224 626 ther away from the village, and thus further away from a source of [821] [152] friction).

[166] There was no singing, but it was done as Moké suggested. Mur- [648] murs of assent came from all over camp, with both Masisi and Manyalibo agreeing loudly.

578 3. Particularly at the beginning of the honey season, when ten- 621 dencies to fission are already well marked, disputes over food, par- 221 ticularly over hunger attributable to poor hunting, are made occasions for enlarging the rift between the camp segments. Thus one day old 578 593 Tungana's younger son, named after his distant relative Njobo, came 578 152 flying back from the hunt in hot pursuit of his wife, Nakoranja. 221 Nakoranja, much to everyone's surprise, had lost her bark cloth and 621 was holding a leaf in front of her private parts, occasionally removing it to emphasize her cry of "I am naked!"

Having made her point she disappeared into her hut and modestly continued her description as to how her husband had torn her bark cloth off to shame her because she wanted to join her "sister" (who was a member of another segment), Ekianga's youngest wife. Young [224] Njobo, standing outside the hut, told the camp that his wife was useless on the hunt, that she could not run as fast as even the slowest animal and let them all escape. Now they had no food and they would be hungry all day. Evidently she could not run as fast as her husband either, for he had caught her and given her a sound beating, ripping off her bark cloth when she tried to escape. He did not deny this, and Nakoranja said that this entitled her to pack up and leave.

578 Evidently this was something that had been brewing for some 593 time, and when the hunt came back and it was seen that the dispute 621 was forming along the line of fission, Tungana intervened and said 166 that there was no sense in everyone making so much noise, that the next day he and his wife were going to leave for the village, and that young Njobo and Nakoranja were coming with them to look after them. The discussion immediately turned to the dangers of the trail, with the two segments siding with each other in common and equally insincere but polite opposition to Tungana's suggestion.

621 4. At a later stage, when fission became inevitable, discontent being 626 so high that the sections were not uniting in the hunt and therefore not getting any meat, old Moké intervened. He stood in midcamp and harangued each section in turn, facing it and naming its mem- [221] bers. He emphasized that this was the honey season and that hunting should be stopped anyway, and everyone go to the forest in search of their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that."

their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that." But Moké did 621
an unusual thing. He said it was all right for the camp to split, but 626
it would displease the forest if it split badly, and it *was* splitting badly ("*apa ndaso aké sinana*"). Tungana had gone to the village; Masisi, siding with Tungana but not wanting to join him, was planning to go east, Ekianga to the north; Cephu was going to leave the territory altogether; and Manyalibo's head "walked without sense" (said in KiNgwana: "*kichwa yaké a na tembela wazi-wazi*") and he didn't know where he was going. This was all bad. For this was one camp, it was Kolongo's.

Kolongo had been dead some three years, and the names of the 621
dead are rarely mentioned. The whole camp fell silent, and very qui- 626
etly Moké recounted the history of the friendship between Kolongo 829
and Njobo, and how they used to hunt together and kill lots of ele- 769
phant and catch lots of antelope and how they always had full stomachs. "Kolongo never allowed noise, Njobo never allowed noise. Now there is nothing but noise, and we are hungry. Kolongo is dead, but that person there, Ekianga [Kolongo's younger brother] that person is now Kolongo. Njobo is not here, but that person and that person [Manyalibo and Masisi were indicated but not named] are Njobo. Let us all go our own ways and get lots of honey and sing honey songs and dance honey dances, then come back to one camp as before and hunt again."

The immediate bickering was stopped, and everyone agreed loudly 621
that Moké was indeed right. But as it turned out Manyalibo made 602
Moké's speech an excuse for siding with Ekianga in a hunting-honey 571
camp, and a deep rift opened up between the hitherto inseparable 578
cousins, Manyalibo and Masisi. Moké threw his lot in with Ekianga, in an effort to dissuade them from any grosser sacrilege, with exhortations to Masisi to make a good camp and gather lots of honey. Ekianga's eldest sister, her daughter, and Njobo's wife and some of his nephews and nieces joined Masisi, as did a young married nephew of Cephu, Kelemoké. Others joined Tungana, who prudently moved close to the village, where he could, by virtue of his age, claim gifts of food from all the sections and from his village *kpara*.

5. During the honey season, with the band divided into four sec- 621
tions, Masisi and Manyalibo were again at odds. Manyalibo, with 221
Ekianga and Moké and old Tungana, among others, formed a power- 224
ful section at the far northern extreme of the territory, and offended 578
Masisi's much smaller section by continuing to hunt. Masisi argued

621 that this was not customary during the honey season, and was displeasing
222 to the forest. He also added that as his section was too small
224 to hunt, Manyalibo was under an obligation to send him a share of all
578 the meat caught by his part of the band. At the same time he set about trying to encourage the usually unwanted Cephu to join him, and swell his section to an economic hunting size. Cephu, always unpredictable, refused, though he agreed to send three nets as a token of goodwill. He never did. These communications were made through a series of visits made by Kelemoké, Cephu's nephew, between the three sections. The fourth section was in the village, and did not enter the dispute.

628 Two neighboring bands, hearing[2] that (a) the Epulu territory was
621 exceptionally well endowed with honey that year, and that (b) Masisi was looking for reinforcement, took advantage of the situation to trespass judicially in the southeastern extreme of the territory, well away from all the others. Their overtures, made in the one instance by a meeting on neutral ground, and in the other by a personal visit to Masisi's camp by Herafu, a distant affine, were coldly rejected, and they were told to leave the territory or there would be war. In each case they responded that the territory was not Masisi's, and that in any case they had rights to the territory through affinal ties. They
[222] added that in view of the surplus of honey Masisi was offending the
[778] forest by trying to steal it all for himself.

222 This put Masisi very much in the wrong. He then raised an issue,
224 long known, to divert attention from himself. He pointed out to his
621 own section that Manyalibo's camp had a drying rack in it, sure indication
578 that he was trading with the village. This was a major crime,
[251] and two youths went to investigate. They found it indeed to be so,
[688] and without much argument Manyalibo offered them food to take back to Masisi. After a great deal of further argument, and threats by the youths that they would tell the rest of the villagers of what appeared to be a secret alliance between two of their members and Manyalibo's section, the youths were allowed to take all the meat they could see, and Manyalibo promised to send a net to his "brother" so he could hunt for himself. Two days later he did this. Attracted by the meat, Cephu sent two of his section to join Masisi, and eventually joined himself. The rift between Masisi and Manyalibo, however, remained, and they did not re-form in the same camp again that

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[203] [2] News of this kind travels between bands via the villages, and through the constant exchange of visits between cognates and friends.

222

year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the 224
forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was 621]
equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. 578 [688]
The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject 222
of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths 621]
and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to 628
enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were 578 [626]
wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked
first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was
hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all [186]
the noise[8] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who
wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was 222
followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest 533
happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed 626
vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to
the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and 626
Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing 578
band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had 222
several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in 152
the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each 621
promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name
them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having
deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women,
Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how
bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that
he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but
instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day
and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all
the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more
irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those
responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited
Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a
fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young [534]
women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*, [533]

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[8] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *akami* in the local dialect of KiBira, or [192]
*keleleʼ* in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable con- [778]
notation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad
(*sinana*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions
of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*akami a mu ndura*), just as it is said
to kill the hunt (*akami a mu mukira*).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

626 wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs,
621 578 and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masisi found the
222 competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women
152 away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.

[533] [534] The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering
[431] and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.

7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always re-
157 lated to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is an-
461 other, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by
536 public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value.
[261] One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discon-
[789] tent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

224 8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number
461 of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to
626 be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the
578 hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

754 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters
578 with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch,
a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two
ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a
handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation
the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's
histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a
[535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she
did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing
[224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to
run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but
Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and
Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that
Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the
incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give
Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad
578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too seriously,
522 Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flapping
626 his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by
the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[6] and said what a
683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further
648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the
571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between
608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty
[186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news
caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were
626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I
683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any
incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

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[685] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., indi-
[157] vidual) theft.
[427] [6] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the
[621] person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he
talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly
[156] the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a
vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

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595 feigned to run into a tree and fall unconscious. She was carried into
578 Cephu's hut, where she stayed until the next day. Then, in a very
304 matter-of-fact way, she emerged, went over to Ekianga's hut and picked up the sick boy. In front of the few who cared to look she made a few incisions with an arrow tip. The boy seemed better, and Loku happily played with him. Ekianga came and inquired how her head was where she hit the tree, and persuaded her to go and lie down. They disappeared into the hut together and that settled the matter. Manyalibo pointed to the hut and observed that it was shaking somewhat. "Sorcery, indeed!" was his comment as he turned his back to go into his own hut.

595 Ekianga settled down, from then onward dividing his attentions equally among his three wives, though seldom again was there a camp when all three were with him at the same time.

578

## DISPUTES CONCERNING TERRITORY

[593] 21. There were only four such disputes that I recorded during an
entire year, all of them slight and apparently indicative of marital disagreements; that is, excluding discussions as to whether or not to break camp and go to the village, a stock suggestion and a good arguing point whenever another issue turns up that is better avoided.
578 Once, however, when such a suggestion was seriously made and the
• 621 general opinion seemed to be that it was time for a move to the vil-
166 lage, an elderly widow, Nakwanji, came out of her hut and harangued
854 the band from midcamp. She said that a child had been born in that camp and that the child was well. Its food was there, in that camp and in that part of the forest, and it should not be taken from its food. Everyone agreed except Tungana, who said perhaps they could compromise and go halfway to the village and make a new camp there. Nakwanji was insistent and said no, this was the child's forest and this was where it must stay as long as it remained well and happy.

621 22. During the big rift in the honey season, Moké was up in the
593 northern part of the territory with Ekianga and Manyalibo. Isa, his
578 son, and Isa's wife, Pikenasona, were at Masisi's camp staying with
602 Njobo's wife. Partly because of the noise Masisi made every evening, and partly because he wanted to be with his father, Isa kept insisting that Pikenasona leave and journey with him to the north. His wife, Njobo's niece, and therefore much at home in Masisi's camp, refused to go. Asofalinda, Ekianga's sister, told Isa it would be bad to go, as it

621

is bad to split a camp because of blood. Usually the metaphor of 593
"stomach" is used in such cases to express kinship, but it was plain 578
that this was what Asofalinda meant. 602

Masisi joined in and said that all members of a camp were of one hearth, regardless of stomach, and they belonged to the hearth; so Isa belonged to this hearth and his father to that. Until the next move of camps that was how it should be. Isa capitulated and continued to stay on.

23 and 24. Mbaaka fell from a tree and broke his arm. While in- 593
capacitated in this way, his recently acquired wife took off to join Cephu, who had invited a number of his Lesé-speaking in-laws to hunt in the western borders of the Epulu territory. When Mbaaka was well enough he went to Cephu's camp and brought her back. On arrival back in the camp, he threw her to the ground and said he
had brought back rubbish, and he didn't know why. His wife got up 593
and sat down in the door of the hut, upright and rigid, in a posture 516
widely used by Mbuti women to show their utmost displeasure. Mbaaka told her to get his supper but she ignored him. His pleas and threats fell on deaf ears, and even when he slapped her once she barely moved. Masisi's wife eventually brought over some food and put it down between them. Mbaaka offered some to his wife but she pretended not to see it, so in a burst of temper he ate all he could and threw the rest away behind the hut. His wife found this too much to bear, and went inside the hut sobbing. She sat upright still, holding a tiny oil lamp in her hand. Mbaaka went in after her and knocked the oil lamp out of her grasp. She promptly picked it up, and this was repeated several times. Eventually she gave up and, still not saying a word, lay down. Mbaaka, trying hard to make peace, lay down beside her, but no sooner was he down than his wife sat up again, and remained bolt upright for the next two hours.

25. Meanwhile there was a diversion. Kengé and his wife were also 593
having a squabble. Kengé, only indirectly connected with Njobo's [564]
family as an affine, was a person of some consequence because, although boastful, it was said he knew the forest better than any other Mbuti, and although he liked village life as well as any, he was not one for any display of individual authority. Roused by Mbaaka's having to go all the way to Cephu's camp to fetch back his wife, Kengé said that all wives were a lot of trouble, his own included. She was empty. "She cannot even speak; when she opens her mouth she just makes noises. She is an animal."

685 34. During a hunt Ekianga's unmarried niece, Ekimanji, had
[224] charge of his two spears and lost these together with her own basket,
[462] full of meat. Her story was that she was standing about, waiting for the rest to join up after a beat, when she had to answer a call of nature. She went a few yards away, and on return found the two spears and the basket gone. She called out, and Masalito, who was nearby, came running over. She asked him to stand there while she went and searched, which she did. She could find no traces. He also searched, and neither could he. It then began to rain and they returned to camp.

The next day the hunt went back to the spot and searched all over but found nothing. They even repeated the hunt in the same spot, casting the nets and beating toward them. Nobody offered any suggestions as to what could have happened, other than that they must have been taken. Not a single individual was hinted at directly or
[186] indirectly. One of the hunters suggested it was a villager, for Mbuti
[183] don't steal, but everyone knew that no villager was anywhere about
in the forest during the hunt. However, the explanation, weak as it was, was better than none and, if not accepted, it was certainly not denied. The matter was not mentioned again.

## 578 DISPUTES CONCERNING THE VILLAGE

*177 35. It might be thought that the village would be a common source
186 of dispute. Far from being so, the village most frequently occurs in
436 disputes as above, as a means of ending a dispute without settling
[621] the blame on any Mbuti and thus hastening the process of fission.
Even money is assimilated into the forest pattern of distribution of food, insofar as it is ever brought into the forest (see 29, above). The only real dispute over money in my records was because the money was received for a spear which had been stolen from one villager and sold back to another, and it was difficult to assess the correct apportionment of the "game" (a hundred francs) between the "hunters."

*177 The village, however, was often being blamed for ill health, and
186 with frequent justification, for sanitation, which was no problem for
[753] the Mbuti in the forest, was a major one in the village. The village
[514] also frequently took the blame for poor hunting, particularly if some
[224] individual or some group in the band (e.g., the women who did not
beat) seemed to be genuinely to blame.

*177 One dispute of major proportions, and one of the few which oc-
439 casioned direct action, did, however, have its cause in the village. The

[P.218]

CHAPTER 12

# Government: External

## BAND TO BAND

628 *Marriage*

• 621 As already seen, the occasions calling for political relationships between one band and another in the forest context are minimal. Insofar as bands can be considered to exist only with respect to forest hunting territory, they cease to exist as political units when in the village, and there even the little interband relationship that pertains in the forest disappears completely.

628 There are basically only three areas of relationship, two of which
584 might be considered formal, or institutional—marriage and trespass.
574 The third, probably the most important structurally, is the inter-
571 family visit. In all three areas there are no recognized or set patterns,
561 each instance being conducted according to the context of the moment. But it will be seen at once that the relationships involved are once again along age lines. Marriage involves an interchange and a relationship between the elders of one band and the elders of another, between the youths of the one and the youths of the other. Trespass involves the hunters. Interfamilial exchange generally involves the older hunters, in my experience, or young married individuals who want on occasion to visit their parents and friends in their old band.

628 If marriage is contemplated between two youths of different bands,
584 it will be the result of their having met through interfamilial ex-
574 change, or while in the village. There will have been an exchange of
[591] visits between the individuals, and when their intentions are made known it is likely, but by no means inevitable, that the family of each will visit the other's band in turn, building their hut close to that of their child's future in-laws.

628 The propriety of the marriage will have been discussed within each
584 band, primarily by the elders; there is no exchange of this kind be-
561

628

582 porarily, and is considerably easier to arrange than a reluctant marriage.
583 It can be seen, then, that the kinds of relationship existing
between bands for the regulation of marriage are necessarily flexible.
628 More important, marriage between bands provides a formal relationship
581 between the nuclear families concerned and so provides also a
594 basis for interfamilial exchange between those bands. To have such
182 an exchange relationship, on a familial level, is of much more importance
than wider political ties to a band which only on the rarest
of occasions may need to act in concert, as a band, with the other
band.

● 621 *Trespass*

224 Each hunting territory being economically self-sufficient, there is
131 generally no need for economic cooperation. Boundaries are frequently
natural features that restrict effectively the movement of both
the hunters and the game, so trespass is also restricted. However, if
following especially prized game, hunters will follow it across such
boundaries with little or no hesitation. It is even said that if a band's
territory is exceptionally unproductive, the band may move into a
corner of its neighbor's territory, the furthest removed from wherever
that band is camped at the time.

628 It is understood that in the case of pursuit of quarry a portion of
224 the game will be sent to the resident band. It is equally understood
that, if moving into someone else's territory, they should be notified and their permission sought. If either of these provisions is not maintained it may lead to friction, and a delegation of hunters from the offended band will visit the others in their camp, perhaps even staying with them for a few days. The question of who forms such a delegation is again largely an economic matter, for the members have to be drawn from the hunters, and the home band will obviously be unwilling to decrease its hunting efficiency to any significant extent. There is the stated possibility of a resort to fighting with wooden clubs; in one instance a few young hotheads suggested using spears, but this appeared to be more a figure of speech to indicate extreme anger, and was promptly rejected by the older hunters. I have, in any case, come across not a solitary instance of such open hostilities taking place between two bands. The visiting hunters are received with respect, and the trespassing hunters generally say that they intend to fulfill their obligations and, as a sign of good faith, offer to send out a hunt so their visitors can bring meat back to their band. If the host

628 224 [602] If the host band insists that the others leave their territory, this will be done, but such action is rare, for it creates a barrier against interfamilial exchange.

628 224 221 621 If there is exceptionally good hunting in one territory and poor in another, and the bands are each small, they may temporarily join as one band. If they decide to cooperate in pursuit of a special hunt, this is achieved in much the same way that segments of a single band rejoin after the honey season. Indeed, during the honey season (among the net-hunters), each section of the band thinks and moves in terms of its specific section of the band territory, and if feelings run high between sections, infringement of section boundaries is considered just as much trespass as if it had occurred between two bands. In the same way that such segments, at the end of the honey season, gradually camp closer to each other, so two bands wishing to cooperate may approach each other.

628 Instances of cooperation, however, are even more rare than instances of trespass, and even though both may be regarded as formal, there is no special mechanism for dealing with them, and their influence in determining relationships between bands is negligible.

*Interfamily Exchange*

628 602 574 Although the above two areas of contact and interband relationship may be considered as formal, being institutionalized to at least some extent, there being a recognizable process of relationship though the outer form changes with the context, neither area is of as much effectiveness, in extent or degree, in determining interband relationships as the persistence with which families exchange visits. But such visits are so utterly unpredictable and circumstantial that there is not even the small amount of discernible process to be seen in the other areas. Whereas negotiations concerning betrothal or trespass at least involve recognizable elements of each band and act in response to a given stimuli, there is no saying when any given family, or how much of it, is going to decide to pack up and visit friends or relatives in another band. Nor do the families themselves generally express any other reason than that their "heart" wants it. No interference is offered by the rest of the band; indeed, there is generally no comment at all, unless their absence becomes prolonged beyond the duration of one camp—approximately a month.

[621] [591] [594] The reasons for which a family might move out of one band and into another, for a temporary visit, are many and varied. Some have

628 already been mentioned, and it should be reiterated that the freedom
602 of individual families to detach and attach themselves more or less at
574 will is of the greatest importance in the maintenance of bands at
621 optimum strength, this consideration overriding any other considera-
591 tions of residence, and apparently governing the system of sister ex-
594 change itself. But the band has absolutely no control over the nuclear family if it chooses to assert itself as such in this way. There are no direct bonds tying the family to other families, or to the band; the only influence the band can exert is between members of the same age group. This may result in only a part of the family moving, though when a family does decide to act in concert it usually does so despite any amount of opposition.

Whatever the purpose of the visit, whether it is in answer to a request to help swell the size of a small band, or whether it be part of an exchange of betrothal courtesies, a desire to see old friends and relatives, sheer whim, or of course displeasure with their own band, a family that visits another band is effecting a relationship between those two bands. Their very presence in the territory of another band entitles any member of the host band, regardless of kinship, to pay a return visit, then or at any time in the future.

628 To a certain extent even individuals visiting in the same way create
574 the same kind of relationship between their own bands and the bands they visit. There is no particular term that distinguishes bands related in this way, and the Mbuti all say that in effect they could always find an excuse, if they wanted it, to visit any band anywhere in the forest—"relatives (friends) are everywhere." But generally there are preferred areas of visitation. Cephu, for instance, was criticized for visiting with the band immediately to the west of the Epulu band. But there was no way of preventing him from doing this, nor even from inviting some of them into the Epulu territory. Generally the exchange relationship exists between bands removed several times,
[582] spatially. This corresponds to the stated preferential marriage pattern, it being considered bad to marry into the immediately adjoining
628 bands. However, in case of trespass, if a dispute ensues, an exchange
594 relationship is sometimes claimed between families, and the dispute
621 is then channeled off in this direction, it being left to those families
[627] to effect some kind of settlement. This may result in the family belonging to the offending band staying behind and visiting with the others, temporarily swelling their hunting strength. Once again, however, the band has no control over the family, and a family seeing it-

self being maneuvered into an awkward situation may suddenly leave 628
altogether and go somewhere else. Neither lineal seniority nor politi- 594
cal authority (chieftainship) are ever even mentioned in any attempt 621 •
to influence a family's movement. When Manyalibo and Masisi, who 602
shared the same grandfather (Manyalibo being the lineal elder), fell 621
out and moved into separate camps, it was Masisi who took the initiative, and although Manyalibo claimed that Masisi ought to respect him because of age, he never suggested that Masisi was subject to his authority. He even stated openly that Masisi had the right to move wherever he wanted, but that it was not good for "brothers" to separate.

Thus interfamily exchange can only be regarded as a direct rela- 628
tionship between two families which, if they happen to be in separate 594
bands, creates a relationship between their respective bands allowing 182
for further such interchanges. Such bands respond to each other's needs with regard to optimum economic size, occasionally cooperate, and possess an additional mechanism for the settlement of interband disputes concerning trespass or marriage exchange.

## BAND TO VILLAGE

In examining relationships between the band and the village we 648 439
find the same distinction, only more clearly made, between formal 121
and informal relationships that are the most effective.

But whereas even latent antagonism between bands is minimal, there is considerable latent antagonism between band and village, manifest not only in opposed systems of economic exploitation but also in opposed systems of values. Open conflict would bring advantage to neither group, and we have to think, in view of the lack of necessary economic interdependence, of the exchange in connection with this antagonism. It does indeed offer each group ample opportunity for insulting the other, though individual exchange relationships sometimes remain amicable, and even intimate, for considerable lengths of time.

The outward objective, at least, of the general Mbuti/Villager relationship is one of economic exchange, for mutual convenience. There are a number of formal levels at which such exchange, and the necessary associated negotiations, may be conducted, using a corresponding number of media:

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO4

648 1. Band/Village: *capita*/Chief
439 2. Lineage/Lineage: Lineage elder/*Kpara*
121 3. Individual/Individual: *Karé*/*Karé*

We shall deal with each in turn to determine the formal nature of the relationship, and the degree to which it is effective.

P
### *Capita/Chief*

621 The relationship of the band as a whole to the village as a whole
648 would be a simple and effective one if the band were, as the villagers
C 563 claim it should be, a unilineal entity based on the principle of patri-
648 lineal descent. However, as we have seen, the band is generally composite, and in any case its composition is constantly changing. Sheer
P C territorial propinquity, however, encourages a relationship of eco-
[439] nomic exchange between these two units, regardless of the composition of either. Generally speaking there is no need for the village to relate to the band as a whole, food exchange being more easily effected at an interfamilial or interpersonal level. However, under the foreign economic pressures mentioned earlier, at certain times villages found it necessary to have the massed help of all the Mbuti they could
C muster. In such a case the village Chief summoned the Mbuti *capita*
[622] and made his wishes known. The *capita* relayed these wishes to the
P [622] band, which then did whatever it thought expedient, after general discussion.

P 648 The *capita* seems to assume more importance as an institution in the villages of the archer area, to the east of the Epulu. However,
554 even there the villagers themselves admit that the institution is for-
622 eign to the Mbuti. I have not once heard it claimed otherwise, by
[177] Mbuti or villagers. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, old
P [888] men and women are accorded respect, but they have no authority and their area of influence is limited in accordance with their age, and
[184] does not include the village. Such elders, then, have no more say than any other Mbuti concerning village matters pertaining to the band as a whole. But village affairs do not fall within the province of any age group, and the *capita* finds himself having to deal separately with each family, if indeed he takes that much trouble at all. Sometimes he may do so if a villager accompanies him to the camp in the hopes of adding strength to the village argument. I have seen this happen among the archers as among the net-hunters, in each case with a direct plea for all Mbuti to go to the village to help with the cotton harvest.

C **As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial,**
563 and will then be maintained even if the Mbuti lineage is removed by
571 a considerable distance from the village of its *kpara*. On the other
177 hand the relationship may be extremely hostile, for if the Mbuti are
P 571 not dealing with their *kpara*, they are certainly dealing with someone
*177 else and this causes a three-way antagonism. The *kpara*, having no
political control over the Mbuti and being unable to apply any effective economic sanctions, take refuge in their belief in supernatural sanctions or else employ the local doctor to effect a curse. Their only hope of practical recompense lies in making a case against the villager with whom their Mbuti are dealing.

C Insofar as the villages themselves have been tending to become
621 somewhat divided, certain members being sent or simply going else-
613 where to work, the situation is aggravated and it is difficult to assess
571 the reasons, precisely, for the noneffectiveness of the interlineage re-
P lationship. Again the major immediate cause, though not necessarily
•621 the reason, is the fluid and composite nature of the Mbuti band, the
613 571 periodic division of which may cut right across lineage divisions.

### *Karé/Karé*

C 608 Male Mbuti individuals are related formally to male village individ-
628 uals through the institutional *karé* brotherhood. The *nkumbi* initia-
571 tions which take place periodically (every three years for the past
881 twenty years or so, in the central Ituri) are not confined to individual
177 villages, but draw candidates from a number of villages within the
P same major segment of the tribe. Frequently the *kpara* will try to see
608 that members of their own immediate family are made *karé* to their
571 Mbuti, but this is not always possible, and the *karé* relationship is
*177 881 liable to cut across the lineage relationship.

It is essentially a brotherhood pact avowing reciprocal obligations
C including and centering around economic exchange. But it is a more
608 intimate relationship than can exist between the Mbuti and their
571 *kpara*, particularly as they are related not only in terms of the knife
177 but also in terms of age. During the period of seclusion in the initia-
P 608 tion camp, *karé* are always expected to be close to each other, al-
571 though any attempt of the one to comfort the other will be ridiculed.
*177 They are, however, frequently set tasks to perform jointly, or made to perform services for each other. A bond is begun with the knife, and may grow, under these circumstances, into a lasting friendship. It is because of this friendship, and not because of the knife, that an Mbuti may well maintain an exchange relationship with his *karé*

C
439 for village luxuries. Bribery, indeed, may be said to be the only effec-
594 tive control the villagers have over the Mbuti. But it is short-lived
563 and costly, and is on an individual or familial basis at the most. As
571 far as internal relations are concerned, the band clearly exists as a
177 territorial unit composed of a number of nuclear families cooperating
P 439 in economic food quest. The Epulu band, and nearly all others stud-
594 ied, are characterized by a composite nature, negating the possibility
571 of lineal authority. Any form of central authority is further negated
*177 by the constant changing of band composition. Leadership exists in
P respect to different fields at different age levels, and is nowhere cen-
*621 tered in a single individual. Any attempt at the assumption of indi-
vidual authority, or even of excessive influence, is sharply countered
by ridicule or ostracism.

P There is consequently no central leadership, in the form of an in-
621 dividual or even of a council, with which the centralized village leader-
608 ship can deal in political terms. Nor is there any lineal leadership, let
*177 alone any stable lineal unit, with which village lineal units can relate,
571 except in theory. The institution of *karé* brotherhood is primarily an
C 563 individual relationship, and although its abuse can enlarge the rela-
177 tionship to a band/village level, there is again no mechanism of effec-
608 tive relationship at that level. Therefore the *karé* relationship, insofar
571 as it is effective, only relates individuals.

P Effective economic relationship of a stable nature can be seen to
621 exist only between individuals or between families, determined by ter-
439 ritorial considerations and by mutual satisfaction. The only control
571 arises from these considerations, heightened by the Mbuti addiction
*177 to certain village foods. However, this fragments the band to such
C an extent that we can say the band simply ceases to exist, as such,
563 in relationship to any village community. Neither the Chief nor the
439 *capita* has the slightest authority or control over the band; flux ren-
571 ders a lineal interrelationship impossible, and we are left with no
177 more than an agglomeration of person-to-person exchange relation-
P C ships that may be economically effective but convey no political con-
[622] trol to either side, the nuclear family being the largest effective unit,
and frequently not even being that.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P draw impressive-looking streaks of blood. She was promptly stopped
754 from "killing" herself, having it explained to her that she was only a
*177 witch and could not really help what she had done, and only had to
554 purify herself.

C However, the deaths continued and nobody else was willing to take
754 Sau's role, and in the end there was no alternative but to accuse her
563 of sorcery. In village belief, witchcraft substance is normally dormant
P but may become activated through a number of causes. A witch is a
*177 person who possesses this substance but has no control over it. Once
754 554 discovered, the witch is under an obligation to keep the substance
761 "cool." Sau obviously was not keeping hers cool, and it is said that if very bad people know they are possessed of witchcraft substance they may learn how to control it deliberately, and they then become sorcerers. Sau, then, was accused of deliberate and malevolent use of
P her witchcraft substance. She was formally condemned to be beaten
[683] to death. The Mbuti made a show of beating her but then stopped, telling the villagers that they did not want to kill her as then they would only have her spirit to deal with (using another purely village concept), which would be much more difficult to control. Exile was suggested instead, and Sau was duly exiled, and departed for her own village in great spirits, laden down with foodstuffs.

P The deaths had caused the band, which originally had been gath-
*177 ered in the village for a wedding, to depart abruptly for the forest as
761 soon as the Sau incident was over. It took a number of days to pre-
754 pare themselves, taking fond farewells of their exchange partners, and
621 Ekianga went ahead with three other hunters and their families to
166 select the site. When the rest arrived they found Ekianga comfort-
554 ably installed, with the sorceress, Sau, happily in an adjoining hut looking after his children. Her position in the forest was in no way changed. She remained a scapegoat, but her right to stay with the band was never seriously challenged, nor were the respect and affection with which she was regarded ever diminished.

P The same use of witchcraft was found in other bands, and the same
*177 professional scapegoats. The other "witches," like Sau, occasionally
564 made fun of the whole thing by miming all their alleged achievements
754 as witches, including the legendary witch's dance and the casting of
184 the "evil eye." In every case the "witch" occupied an otherwise perfectly normal role in camp life, having no more and no less respect
P than any other by virtue of being a scapegoat.
*177 In forest life there is no need for witchcraft as a social institution,
754
[182]
[626]

776 778 tence of a belief in such a spiritual being, and its nature as being generally that of "the forest." From the foregoing description of the two levels of existence, human and *keti*, and of the generally accepted principle of spiritual animation, it is plain that there should be a source of such spiritual force. [621 628] The mobility of the Mbuti, the composite nature of the bands and the frequency of interchange between bands all lead to a confused scattering of the various terms that appear in the village religious systems. I have been utterly unable to discern any pattern in which the godhead is divided into entities concerned with different aspects of Mbuti life, each with a distinct name; e.g., a god of the hunt known by one name, a god of the bush known by another, and so forth. Even within any one band it seemed singularly clear that there is only one godhead, though different individuals in that band may well use different names.[2] The forest *is* that godhead (*ndura nde kalisia*, or *ndura nde mungu*), rather than being thought of merely as its abode; hence the sanctity of the forest, and the profanity of anything that is not of the forest. That this is so is seen in the almost universal answer given when faced, either among themselves in the course of discussion or directly, by the question of where *pepo* derives from. The answer is that it derives from the forest itself (*pepo a kidi suba ndura*). Not just the trees or streams, or the sky or the soil, but from the totality, down to the last grain of sand.

778 We have shown earlier how the Mbuti frequently sing and shout to the forest, addressing it as "father" or "mother." They also sometimes address it as "friend," or even "lover." They are perfectly well able to explain this, for they say that "the forest is everything"

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114 776 778 184 [2] Schebesta (1952, 303) says that the Basua (net-hunters) refer to the divinity as *mungu, keti, kalisia,* and *songé*. I have found all these terms used, but without any different significance in the forest context, while they each have a special and separate significance among the villagers. The important point is that Schebesta recognizes that the divinity "loves" the Mbuti, who owe everything to him, while the villagers are afraid of him. Here I believe Schebesta to have come across the forest as it is considered by the Mbuti in the evening *molimo*, the source of all good. In discussing the archer concept of the divinity, Schebesta (1952, 305–6) refers to the different visualizations they have of *toré*, frequently ugly, noisy and menacing. I found these same interpretations of *toré* among the archers, but always in reference to the other aspect of the forest, not as the mother provider but as the father lawgiver. Among the net-hunters, when the morning *molimo* comes into camp to wreak havoc, it is greeted with cries of *e téré, e téré*, it being openly agreed that this was a form of the archer word *toré* and referred only to this aspect of the *molimo*. But my informants would add, "It is all the same thing, it is all the forest." Schebesta's description of *toré* not only corresponds to a different aspect of the Mbuti *molimo*, but it also corresponds closely to the description given by Vergiat (1936, 53–7) of the "génie de la brousse" among the Ubangi villagers, to the northwest. Here, as by the Lesé/Efe, that divinity is described as a grotesque caricature of an Mbuti, fearful to all villagers but strangely friendly to the Mbuti hunters.

765 534 778 **It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as** sacred in itself, hidden though it may be. There was one instance when a trumpet was stolen by a member of a different family and a different band, simply because it had such a good "voice" and could sing so well. Whatever power it possesses it is believed to possess through the quality of its "voice." The fact that it can be stolen or lost (they sometimes get washed away in the floods that follow a particularly torrential downpour), without causing any ritual crisis, is in keeping with the lack of concern for inheritance of the trumpet. It is said by youths that anyone who wants to make one can have it, but that if they do not want to be bothered they need not, for "the *molimo* is a lot of work." Elders, however, say clearly that there used [613] to be one for each family, and by family they plainly defined a minimal lineage, all male members descended from a single living grandfather or from the same father, living or dead.

765 534 [611] [174] The fact that they also say that the *molimo* used to be the concern of the band only, perhaps indicates an earlier but now less pronounced emphasis on the principle of patrilineal descent; be that as it may, a noted feature of *molimo* festivals today is their utterly nonlineal nature (Tables 9 and 10).[1] With reference to the greater *molimo* held for Balekimito, there were at one time three *molimo* trumpets in action, only one of which belonged to a member of Balekimito's lineage, the second belonging to her son, the third to Kokoyo, whose wife's stepmother's brother was married to a woman of the same clan as Balekimito—a rather distant claim to lineage—but Kokoyo and Ekianga brought out their *molimo* trumpets because their *roho* wanted it. [621] Thus, by this means they emphasized the importance not of lineage membership but of membership of the band, and the *molimo*, as of old, was at least a band festival, if not a lineage festival.

765 621 771 778 181 182 A more systematic analysis in the next chapter shows the importance of the *molimo* festival as an integrating factor in Mbuti life, and indeed the importance of their whole religious system, based as it is upon a belief in the benevolence of a forest spirit or power. It can, for the moment, be seen clearly enough that it expresses among other things the latent antagonisms that exist between the sexes, because of the same lack of clear, formal sex delineations that characterize the *molimo* itself. It also unites the band (regardless of kinship considerations) in a common expression of the dependence of the Mbuti upon the forest, not only as an economic entity but also as a spiritual entity, a spiritual power that looks after their needs but which is also able to inflict hardship and punishment. The *molimo* heightens

[1] **[see page 331 -- Analyst]**

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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the practical economic dependency of the Mbuti upon the forest, 621 •
which is felt and acknowledged, by forcing an acknowledgment of 771
the most basic dependency of all, that of life and death. The associa- 778
tion with the festival of all the basic elements—fire, water, air and 181
earth—and the central importance of food and sex, all combine to 182
create a highly direct, personal and intimate relationship between
the Mbuti and the forest, while at the same time binding them together as a band, the one individual dependent upon the next.

601 Another important aspect of the terminology is that it does not 602 differentiate between cognates and affines, and is used to include all, without any distinction of this kind. In an Mbuti hunting band, a hunter may well have a uterine brother hunting to one side of him and his uterine sister's husband to the other side. He depends on each equally for both success and for safety, and any preferential behavior, such as might be signified in another form of terminology, • [621] must be avoided. To distinguish between cognates and affines in the daily hunting and camp life of the Mbuti, as to distinguish between matrikin and patrikin, or even between kith and kin, on any grounds except age and locality, is not only needless, it is destructive of the sense of unity that is vital to the close cooperative nature of Mbuti economic and political life.

601 Mbuti personal terminology, as in the more conventional kinship 602 systems, equally reflects interpersonal bonds, then, but they clearly 571 cut across all strictly kinship considerations. This can to some extent 621 be construed as a denial of kinship ties, and it certainly implies that such ties do not form the basis of social organization in the band. [648] But it is better expressed as a lack of concern for kinship that, whatever its origins, is particularly well suited to one of the band's major objectives, the preservation of the greatest possible political distance [182] between itself and the village. It will be readily seen that whereas lineage considerations would divide the Mbuti, the generational system, if considered vertically, effects the widest possible classificatory unity from which the villagers are absolutely excluded. But for the moment to keep to the forest context, the same unity is in perfect consonance with the nonlineal nature of the band, the unity of which any lineal system would destroy. Here we have to refer to one other usage of the same personal terminology; namely, when the Mbuti [778] refer to themselves as *bamiki ba ndura*, the children of the forest. [829] This, together with their habitual reference to the forest as mother and father, extends the nuclear-family model to incorporate the larger

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601 *père, père des pères; ou bien on se sert de termes qui remontent à certaines représenta-* 152 *tions mythiques, et dont le nombre est très élevé."* ("Names attributed to the Godhead 778 fall into two categories. Either one simply invokes the name *afa*, *bapapa* or *odu* . . . father, grandfather, or father of fathers . . . or else one uses terms that derive from mythological beings, of which there are a very great number.")

This indicates the same filial attitude to the forest that I found among the net-hunters. Among the archers, I myself most frequently heard *afa*, used with the same degree of affection as *ema* or *eba*. However, among the archers I equally often heard the forest (God) addressed as *ema* (mother), rarely heard *bapapa*, and never *odu*. My participation in the religious life of archer bands, however, was limited.

601

group—be it the sub-band, the band, or even the total Mbuti popula- 602
tion—as a politico-economic unity. The situation is somewhat analo- 571
gous to the more common lineal patterns, where a people see their 621 •
ultimate unity in descent from a common ancestor; the Mbuti find 778
their unity in their common dependence upon the forest. 829

Taking care not to become involved in issues of causality, we can 602
now see the structural implications of this lack of concern with actual 621
kinship, for it alone makes possible not only the nonlineal nature of the band but the fluidity of its composition. But here we have to introduce another factor, the absence of which would lead to the rapid disintegration of the corporate nature of the band. In the absence of the continuity provided by any kinship system, particularly under the condition of flux we have described for this Mbuti band, continuity and corporateness are seen in terms of territory. We have pointed out that the band can be defined only in terms of territory, the individuals forming that band changing from month to month; perhaps even this is implied in the personal terminology which, as seen, differentiates the sexes only at the parental level in terms of the family hearth—the most basic territorial unit of all.

The system also indicates a lack of concern with problems of super- 561
ordination and subordination. Even problems are resolved in the 554
forest context by the use of relative age. Their resolution is only truly 571
difficult in one vital context, once again the forest-village relationship. [177]*
It is consistent with the essentially egalitarian nature of Mbuti social behavior, and it successfully avoids lending any support to the assumption of individual authority on grounds of lineal seniority, which authority would again destroy the essential cooperative unity of the band.

The non-lineal nature of the band itself calls for some explanation, 601
and now we are in a better position to understand it, for we can see 602
clear structural elements that are only obscured when seeking to find 621
principles of band organization in terms of kinship. The terminological system reflects as neatly as could any diagram the essential principle of age. This is the one factor it emphasizes above all others, except the common Mbuti unity as *bamiki ba ndura* (children of the forest).
We have seen throughout our description of Mbuti forest life how [561]
activity and responsibility are regulated according to age level, and the terminology clearly indicates where one's loyalties lie. Such loyalties are entirely incompatible in so small a cooperative society with

601 602 621 • the crosscutting vertical loyalties of a lineal kinship system. The territorial band is the only reasonable answer.

602 621 561 121 We use the term "territorial" rather than bilateral, for the latter term still overemphasizes considerations of vertical descent. This is to negate the whole functional value of the generational system as used by the Mbuti, who use it to establish firm bonds between age mates, and to assign different and essential tasks to different age levels, thus avoiding the remotest chance of centralization of power or authority. [114] But we certainly do not use the term as does Steward (1955, 143), who uses it "to designate certain primitive societies which consist of many unrelated nuclear or biological families." Steward implies that relationship (he does not state what degree of relationship) not only is of no concern, but that it does not exist between member families of the band. It would be difficult to find a more composite Mbuti band than that of the Epulu, yet a glance at Table 4, giving the band membership at the close of 1957, shows that every single individual, representing some twenty-two different lineages, is "related" by clear consanguineal or affinal bonds to every other. No individual stands alone, though the relationship may sometimes be remote.

621 602 121 582 And most certainly while stating that age and territory are more effective principles of organization than kinship, we do not deny that kinship is recognized. We are merely stating that social interaction among the Mbuti is based on generation and territory. A system, to deserve the term, must be effective in action, and we have seen how seldom kinship relationships are called into account among the Mbuti, the major occasion being a proposal of marriage. There the concern with kinship is not so much in terms of the politico-economic implications of the marriage, as a clear-cut consideration of lineal distance. The stated prohibition is against marrying on the side of either the mother or father, but so long as the memory of the elders can trace no connection, there is no further concern.

58 621 602 [561] Sister-exchange marriage preserves the unity of the *apud'i*, and indeed enhances it when, as can happen in the composite band, the two couples reside side by side. The lack of marriage and divorce ritual does not indicate any lack of concern for one's age level, for one always marries within that level and so is never lost to it, but it is another symptom of the general lack of concern with kinship, this [illegible] with affinity rather than lineality. A marriage is effected by living together; divorce is effected by one or other spouse simply going to live

elsewhere. If this is taken to indicate a lack of concern not only for 58
kinship but also for social stability, it can also be regarded, precisely 621 •
because of the freedom it allows, as a further mechanism by which 602
the constant flux so characteristic of the band is maintained. That
this flux itself has a function will be seen in the final chapter, when we
deal again with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

The different functions of each age level have been described (pp. 561
110, 111, 112 *seq.*), and the organizational value of making the horizontal 621
distinction in the composite band is self-evident. Each age
level is cooperative in activity, certain activities (such as the hunt)
calling for cooperation between two or three age levels still preserving
the distinction by allocating different roles to each. Interpersonal [571]
relations are determined primarily by age level, and authority has also
been seen to be diffused through the different levels.

The transition from childhood to youth is marked for boys and 881
girls alike by participation in the *elima*. Adulthood is conveyed by 885
the act of marriage, which carries with it the right to own a net. The 581
rare bachelor who proves himself as a great hunter and still does not 561
marry may, by combined virtue of his age and his skill, own a net, but
the accepted qualification is that of marriage, emphasizing another
major Mbuti concern, that of procreation.

Transition from adulthood to elderhood is less clear-cut and more 888
filled with tension, for though an elder enjoys many privileges and 561
has, set aside for him as such, certain vital roles in the social organization,
he misses the excitement of the hunt, the pride and satisfaction
of rearing a family, and he certainly recognizes that this is the final
transition.

The nonlineal (or cognatic) band, then, divided horizontally into 621
age levels rather than vertically into lineages, effects an absolute unity 613
throughout each level, whereas it would otherwise be divided into as 561
many sections as there were lineages. Its persistence and continuity
are seen in terms of territory. There may well be a tendency for certain
lineages to remain within the same territory for successive generations,
but such association is incidental rather than structurally determined.
The demography and internal organization, while allowing 621
for marriage within the band, make it essential for much marriage [582]
exchange to take place between different and preferably not adjacent
bands. Since the residence of the newlywed couple is determined by [591]
immediate economic considerations, such as the relative size and [181]
composition of the two bands, territory is obviously not an individual

621 value (though an individual generally knows and therefore feels at
[591] home in one territory more than in others) so much as a group value.
[181] The stated concern of the Mbuti is not to perpetuate lineage but to
[101] perpetuate the band, and bands are not only defined but named by
[103] territory. Individual camps are given specific names according to their locality. *Apa toangbe* is the camp under the *toangbe* trees; *apa* Lelo is the camp by the Lelo River, and so forth. It is significant that when referring to another band it is generally referred to by its current camp name, or the last camp name known, rather than by the more general name by which its whole hunting territory is known. This implies a recognition of the changeability of the composition of the band, and an emphasis on what the band is at any given moment, defined by the particular part of its territory it is hunting at the moment.

621 Practical considerations of territory are that birth in a territory
131 conveys the right to hunt with that band throughout life, and it gen-
[224] erally conveys a sentimental attachment to the territory that may
[602] well act as a stabilizing factor. Cognatic or affinal relationships may be utilized to acquire the right to hunt in other territories, but one
[628] then becomes a member, if temporary, of the band in which one is hunting.[4] But it is when one widens the concept of territory, so that it implies more than a mere area defined by boundaries, that the notion acquires its most fundamental importance. As a definable area it is of economic and political significance in providing the framework within which hunting by different bands can take place without danger of shortage or need for conflict; it is also of social significance in providing a symbol of band unity, and the promise of continuity. But
[192] the term used by the Mbuti for territory is the same word used for forest, *ndura*. Regarded in this light, territory assumes vastly added significance.

621 When an Mbuti says "This is our forest" ("*Nde ndura ndasu*"),
[186] he may be defining the territory of the band in which he is a current member, or he may be defining the Mbuti as against the villagers.
[222] Alternatively, if in the honey season among the net-hunters, he may
[31] be defining the territory in which his particular subsection of the band

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[574] [4] This again is an example of different degrees of kin relationship being recognized but not made explicit, because explicit recognition would alter the distance between the individuals and so disturb the *apua'i* relationship. Once in the new camp, the visitor is assimilated into the age-level system of that band regardless of the nature of his kin relationships. In giving his reasons for making the visit, either to his own band or to the band he is visiting, an Mbuti will not spell out the relationship but will most likely use the personal name, coupled perhaps with the appropriate generational term. The term alone would plainly not indicate clearly enough whom he was going to visit.

is resident. It is seldom that he refers merely to geographical boundaries, 621 for trespass, as seen, is rare and of little consequence. Yet it is a term he frequently uses, and as an organizational principle it is equal in importance to age.

While agreeing with Steward that the environment may to some 114 extent be determinant as well as permissive of certain elements of 182 social organization, I find it impossible to see the validity of his wider 621 deterministic claims for cultural ecology.[5] But while Steward seems to have overreached himself, or rather overreached his material, in trying to draw up general principles of culture change, nonetheless in regarding cultural ecological adaptations as "creative processes" (1955, p. 34), his stress on cultural ecology as a particular factor is highly relevant to the Mbuti and in itself an important contribution. We have seen throughout the importance of the economic abundance offered by the forest, permitting economic independence to each band. While the presence of the village tribes is sufficient indication of the permissibility of cultivation, at the technological level of the Mbuti one might say that the environment determines hunting and gathering. It is certainly relevant to say that the Mbuti, at least, would agree with Steward, for they say it is the only way they can live, that if they cultivate they will die. The truth of their assertion is not relevant here; its importance lies in that it reveals the depth of their felt dependence upon the forest.

Nothing is gained, however, by saying that the Mbuti exploitative

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[5] Indeed, it would be impossible to do so since Steward uses the Mbuti as an example of an ecologically determined patrilineal band, content to base his analysis on Putnam (1948) as interviewed by Carleton Coon and represented in a brief and obviously general and sketchy article. Steward's only other Mbuti reference is to Schebesta's preliminary seventeen-page field report in *Anthropos* (1931). A minimum of inquiry would have revealed numerous other sources, which while admittedly unsatisfactory would, through their very divergence, at least have demonstrated the inadvisability of relying on the two sources quoted (ref. Turnbull, 1965). Further evidence to support his theory, for the Central African Negritos, was drawn by Steward from the reports of Schmidt (1910) and Trilles (1932). Not one of the many articles in *Zaïre, Congo,* or *Kongo-Overzee,* is cited, nor is Schebesta's major work, *Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri,* nor the abridged and revised edition of that work which appeared in French in 1952, *Les Pygmées du Congo Belge.* Unsupported assertions such as that "the exploitative patterns produced the features typical of the patrilineal band" (Steward, 1955, p. 128) are bad enough; the apparent ignorance of major texts (for Steward nowhere gives any reasons for not using them) is worse; but still worse is the sheer misrepresentation of the facts he does claim to have at his disposal. Thus he claims that the populations he has selected to illustrate patrilineal bands—the Bushman, Congo Negritos, Australians, Tasmanians and Fuegians, "and others"—are similar "because the nature of the game and therefore of their subsistence problems is the same in each case" (1955, p. 38). It is difficult to see much similarity between subsistence problems of the Kalahari Desert and the Equatorial Rain Forest, even if they are on the same continent.

114 patterns produce "features typical of the patrilineal band," for the
182 patterns differ from group to group, and within each group from one
621 time of the year to the next. At one time or another, each group, net-hunters
or archers, will be able to present bands that resemble patrilineal
units; at other times the same bands will be utterly nonlineal,
even though the exploitative pattern may not have changed.

182 Nonetheless, the environment itself does play a vital structural
role, and while not necessarily determining the exploitative activity,
or the dependence of the Mbuti upon it, is determinant of their value
system so long as that dependence is felt. For, feeling that way, regarding
[778] the forest as *ema* the provider, and as *eba* the ruler, believing
that any deviation from the way of life ordained for them by the
forest would be fatal, the Mbuti effect what control they can over
their lives by a constant effort to "rejoice the forest."

183 Conceiving that the forest is intelligent, the Mbuti conceive that it
778 is like them, and consequently the ideal that they hold for themselves
is the ideal they attribute to the forest. While age and territory are
[621] effective in organizing the band, dividing it into significant units,
binding it together as a whole, and determining the general nature of
interpersonal relationships, the territory enlarged into the forest seen
as mother and father acts as the ultimate sanction of all behavior.
There are certain recognized forms of behavior that lead to a "good"
band, and others that lead to a "bad" band. The appropriate positive
and negative sanctions are formulated in such a way that all actions
are either pleasing to the forest—leading to the ideal of *ekimi*, or
quietness—or displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami*, or noise.
(*Ekimi* and *akami* are, in practice, essential elements in determining
the success or failure of the hunt.)

183 Thus it is recognized that cooperation is essential for the success
577 of the hunt, so it is stated that laziness and aggressiveness and disputatiousness
778 are all displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami* (as
indeed they do). The *akami* is their own reward, for *akami* destroys
[157] the hunt and "kills" the Mbuti. On the contrary, to hunt well, to have
a full stomach, to sing and dance, is to please the forest and lead to
[224] *ekimi*, or "quietness," and *ekimi* in turn brings good hunting, and is
associated with singing and dancing and feasting.

779 Here is a very clear example of the closest possible association between
778 religious belief and ethical behavior. The distinction made by
626 Radcliffe-Brown (1952, p. 172) between law, morality and religion,
121 upheld by legal sanctions, sanctions of public opinion, and religious
[114]

sanctions, does not hold good for Mbuti society, where the three 577
principles are inextricably fused. One might be able to talk of law, 778
even if law implies sanction by force, for the Mbuti believe that the 626
forest has such power and force and will use it. Indeed, in their experi- 121
ence it does, for transgression is met with the force of *akami*, which [114]
kills. This is thought of as a very direct and practical response on the part of the forest as the law. On the other hand, public opinion can hardly be said to exist, for there is no public spokesman, and every opinion on behavior is expressed in terms of pleasing or displeasing the forest. Such public action as may be taken—ridicule or ostracism—is taken in the name of the forest. Exile is literally being sent to the forest to meet it directly. Religious sanctions are not differentiated from any others; the threat is the same—noise and displeasure.

Ultimately, then, in our consideration of territory, despite the ob- 621 •
vious practical values involved and a certain extent of ecological 778
determination of behavior patterns, the territory as a principle of or- 181
ganization must be regarded as a religious principle. Indeed, life itself, for the Mbuti, can almost be regarded as a ritual designed to please
the forest and secure *ekimi*. There is, as noted, an almost total ab- 778
sence of magic, and the only ritual that can be truly considered as 533
such, and is not otherwise a necessary daily activity, is song. We have [189]
seen that song is designed specifically to rejoice the forest, and to draw its attention to its children, but beyond this and its reinforcement, through musical technique, of the values of age and cooperation, there is nothing particularly remarkable about it as a social institution.

It is only when we come to death that there is a marked departure 765
from the normal tenor of life, and a ritual, the *molimo*, that might be 181
regarded as a ritual in the Durkheimean sense of recreating society 121
and reaffirming the social sentiment. While any interpretation of re- 182
ligious ritual of this kind is highly questionable, the attempt has to be made.

Leaving aside the "legal" aspect of the *molimo* when it appears in the early hours of the morning to wreak havoc in the camp, there are few rituals that could be more explicitly concerned with the "recrea-
tion of society" in the most literal sense. Death is the most final and 761
inescapable of all crises, and for it there is no remedy. But it threatens 182
more than the life of the individual; it threatens the continuity of the band, and so threatens the ritual of life by which the forest is pleased. Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted

Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted
761 with regret, but there is enormous concern to conceal the regret and
152 avoid any excessive show of grief, for crying is *akami*. The uncom-
778 fortable fact of death has to be obliterated from the memory as quickly
182 and effectively as possible, and the band, which has received a blow at its strength, must be rejuvenated in an exaggerated display of all the things pleasing to the forest—good hunting, singing, dancing,
765 feasting and, above all, *ekimi*. More than this, the *molimo*, as we have
182 seen, is a means of reaffirming the effective division of the band into
• 621 age groups, and through both the participation of the old lady, who
535 demonstrates the power of the women over the men, and through the
831 *ekokomea* dance, the lack of sex differentiation is emphasized. *Ekokomea* may also be regarded in a similar light as the erotic dance over the fire, where the men symbolically copulate over the scattered embers, fanning them to life. Certainly the sexual act is represented in the *molimo* dances, if not in the symbolism of the *molimo* trumpet itself and the way in which it is handled, and there is very evidently expressed concern with the regeneration of life.

765 The *molimo* is also an occasion on which the band reaffirms all its
621 interpersonal loyalties, and its unity as a band, regardless of kinship
182 considerations. (This is not to deny that the band, and the *molimo*, may at one time have had a more definitely lineal structure.) It is significant that it insists on participation by all adult males, including not only affines but adult visitors living temporarily with the band under an obligation, default in which is punishable by death. Such death itself is said to be brought by the *molimo*; informants differed as to *how* death would actually take place—some said by two spears, some by beating—but in all cases it was held that the *molimo* would bring death to any who did not fulfill his obligations.

778 Thus the forest is intimately associated with the Mbuti at death,
824 just as it is at birth. The same forest that gives life and strength
76 through the juices of the vine, and through the vine and wooden
[789] charms tied around an infant's wrist, may bring death to that infant, if as an adult he fails to rejoice the forest during the *molimo* festival.

372 Fire, which is the gift of the forest, but whose ownership is dis-
[778] puted, is central in the life of the Mbuti, representing life itself. (One
[761] legend has it that fire was first owned by a chimpanzee; another by
[773] woman; another by the *keti*. In any case, man [Mbuti] ultimately stole it and now possesses it.) During the *molimo*, men pass their
372 hands through the flames and then rub gently over their faces. The
765 *molimo* trumpet is passed over the flames. Sometimes men put coals

in their mouths, or hold them in their hands. Burning coals are put 372
in the mouth of the trumpet. When the trumpet enters the camp at 765
night it is preceded by a youth carrying burning embers which he waves in the air and touches to the ground to leave a trail of glowing cinders, the "footsteps" of the *molimo*. And of course the *molimo* fire is the object of attention of the old lady and her attendant. The final extinction of the fire is the signal for the return of the *molimo* to the forest, and the end of the festival.

The festival emphasizes and reaffirms everything of importance in 765
the life of the Mbuti. And perhaps one of the most important things 621 •
it emphasizes is accompanied by the least ritual—the closing of the 182
path leading to the village. To the same end, but more dramatic, is 186
the way in which a *molimo* festival will come to a complete halt if a 829
villager comes to the camp. For the *molimo* not only reaffirms the unity of the band; it reaffirms the unity of the Mbuti in opposition to the village. It is essentially a "matter of the forest," and the entire system that it upholds operates only in relation to the forest.

In the same way that a solitary villager can transform a forest camp into a village camp, just by his presence, so is any contact between the two worlds, except one of opposition, impossible. The system that the *molimo* recreates in the forest, the very life of the Mbuti that in itself is a ritual of pleasing the forest, cannot persist in the
village. The ritual closing of the path is clearly symbolic of the Mbuti [177] *
concern to keep the village out of the forest, to keep the two worlds apart. When they, as individuals or as a band, leave the forest and visit the village, they do precisely that—they leave the forest. It is this opposition, which is so sharply defined in the *molimo*, that is the basis of the Mbuti relationship with the villagers.

Indeed, certain elements of the forest system can only be explained 177*
in relationship to the village context, such as the excessively fluid 12
composition of the band and the almost paranoid attitude to a sin- 182
gle villager passing through a hunting camp, sufficient to suspend the
vital and central, all-important *molimo* festival, even at its height, or
transform it into a village-style parody. This quite singular feature
has found no explanation in terms of either the village alone or the
forest alone. Let us then briefly review the forest system, and look
at it again in the village context. The following elements have 621 •
emerged as having the greatest structural significance:

1. THE BAND is the basic unit, its membership being influenced by
economic rather than kinship considerations. Constant association
and cooperative compatibility outweigh kinship even within the
band in regulating the process of fission and fusion. This latter pro- [221]
cess is related to the annual honey season, but it is not determined by
it. The over-all size of the band, or of its subsections, is, however, de- [162]
termined by ecological factors resulting in a maximum of about thirty [594]
nuclear families for a band, and a minimum of three families for a sub-
section. Although the band is nonlineal, the network of consanguineal
and affinal interpersonal relationships is recognized to link all mem-
bers, so that the terminology, while referring to age levels regardless of
actual or fictive kinship, still has the same affective qualities of kin-
ship terminology, the term referring to age mates (*apua'i*) being the
most widely used, and the most effective.

With the best will in the world, it is not possible to apply the kind 602
of analysis suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1958) for following his argu- 121
ment (that the biological family makes a poor starting point); further 561
we must also abandon the affinal family and the system of affective 571
relationships that Lévi-Strauss saw to pertain there. For among the 593
Mbuti affective relationships are determined more by age than by [114]
kinship, consanguineal or affinal. We simply cannot follow a set formula that takes no account of the age factor. Thus *f/s* is positive when *s* is a child.[1] It is negative when *s* is a youth, becomes less strained when *s* becomes a hunter, but only approaches positive again when *f* becomes an elder. In other words the relationship is positive as long as *f/s* are not in adjacent age levels. The greatest friction arises when *s* approaches adulthood and is about to become a hunter, a signal for the retirement of the father into elderhood. It

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[1] *f* = father; *s* = son; *m* = mother; *d* = daughter; *b* = brother; *z* = sister.

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Despite all of which, and the lack of structurally significant rules 121
of inheritance of property or status (names sometimes being handed 561
on down to alternate generations, but not necessarily so), and with 593
no apparent concomitant inheritance of status, certainly not of prop- 424
erty, there is a recognition of the patrilineage, and a tendency to- 613
ward patrilocality.[3] 554

2. AGE is the prime factor in dividing the band into significant 561
units, the significance being seen in terms of domestic, economic, 621 •
legal and governmental responsibilities. Each age level has a distinct
role that contributes to the total social order, and in all these aspects
of life it is consistently of greater import than kinship. The con-
sistency still remains as firm in religious life, and following the ulti-
mate crisis of death. The dead belong, as it were, to yet another age 561
level, and one that is almost dissociated from the four levels of the 761
living. Thus after death there is no familial concern for the dead, as [769]
seen in the complete lack of concern with ancestral ghosts. Far from
disclaiming the dead relatives through fear[4], the Mbuti continue to
regard them with affection insofar as they regard them at all. Their
preference for forgetting the dead reflects an attitude toward death,
not to the individual dead.

Each age level has its own way of earning the respect of the band 561
as a whole, by fulfilling what is referred to as its "duty." Thus the duty 88
of children is to grow up in good health. The duty of youths is to sing, flirt and play—and help the parental level. The duty of the hunters is to hunt and, oddly enough, to create *akami*, or noise, and the duty of

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[3] We have to assert that there is, for the moment, no evidence that the territorial band is a product of special considerations, as suggested by Steward and Service (in whose terminology the band is "composite"). In particular we must reject, for the Mbuti, the assertion of Service (1962, p. 49) so convenient to his argument for virilocality, that all such societies were, before they were "so thoroughly subjugated," characterized by fighting between "unrelated groups," resulting in "fears, dangers and enmities." Also it is necessary to deny his assertion that such societies are "enclaved among more powerful neighbours—and cannot but lose or be heavily punished for any breach of the peace." If anything, in the Ituri, it is the villages that are enclaved. Further gross misrepresentation, perhaps owing to paucity of reliable material, is offered by Service (1962, p. 108) in the bald statement: "The composite band, on the other hand, is obviously a product of the near-destruction of aboriginal bands after contact with civilization. In all cases there is conclusive evidence of rapid depopulation by disease which, when combined with ending of hostilities among the aborigines themselves under the dominance of the common enemy, resulted in the merging of previously unrelated peoples." The evidence now available, while not denying the possible validity of such historical reconstruction, in no way supports it. Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary. [621] [648] [114]

[4] For an example of precisely the opposite situation, see Beattie (1960, p. 76), where concern for kinship obligations during life is continued after death, resulting in a desire to disavow relationships.

561 the elders is to restore *ekimi*, or quietness, and also, following their
88 alternate generation, to play and sing, if in a somewhat different manner. The elders may also flirt.

Above all, each age level has its own responsibility in the total band economy.

621 3. TERRITORY is the principle by which the band, divided hori-
561 zontally by age, sees its unity vertically, through all four generational
[594] levels. Territory, represented by the hearth, recognizes the divisions
of the band from the nuclear family, represented by the family hearth,
to the four age levels, represented by the different hearths at the
*kumamolimo*, for youths, hunters and elders (children remaining by
621 the family hearths). Territory, represented by an area enclosed by
131 recognizable boundaries, defines and is the symbol of unity of
the band. In its widest extension, the forest itself, territory forms the
basis for the unity of all Mbuti in their common opposition to the
[648] village world. The village world is frequently referred to as *indenji aku*,
[192] or in the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as *inchi ingina*—directly trans-
lated as "another territory." Each band has its own *indenji*, and inter-
marriage between noncontiguous bands is preferred because of the
rights it conveys, each to the other's territory. The Mbuti themselves
say it is good to have relatives (friends) in many camps, for then one
628 never "walks emptily" (*tamba bulé*). One of the great *molimo* songs
602 is "*me tamba bulé*"—"I am walking emptily." The importance lies not
in the initial or future residence of the married couple, but in the
exchange relationship established by their marriage, enabling individ-
uals or families of each band to exchange visits with members of
the other, never having to "walk emptily."

621 For the Mbuti territory in its widest aspect, as the forest, also rep-
778 resents the spiritual source of their entire being, and effectively oper-
ates as the ultimate sanction of social behavior.

822 4. NOISE, or *akami*, is another element of structural significance,
and must be considered in relation to its counterpart, *ekimi*—quiet.
Noise is recognized as having considerable practical significance, such as its effect in scaring away animals. This can be desirable or undesirable, depending on the situation, and so can noise be desirable or otherwise. Ultimately, however, noise kills, and so generally is to be avoided. It may be used in times of danger or crisis for protective purposes, and apart from shouting to frighten away wild animals while on the trail, the Mbuti also whistle to stop all human sound, in

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121 in the Mbuti/Villager situation. The basis of the proximity and distance
*177 tance elements does not rest on kinship, and the relationship is as
571 much between the two groups as it is between individuals, otherwise
C the situation conforms to Radcliffe-Brown's model quite clearly—*viz.*
121 (1952, p. 95): "The show of hostility, the perpetual disrespect, is a
177 continual expression of that social disjunction which is an essential
571 part of the whole structural situation, but over which, without destroying or even weakening it, there is provided the social conjunction of friendliness and mutual aid."

In the Mbuti/Villager situation the relationship appears to be symmetrical and permissive, though both sides do occasionally take offense, the village side even sometimes taking counteraction. The ineffectiveness of taking offense or action, however, only serves to heighten the characteristic "social disjunction," and there is no doubt that beneath the display of hostility and disrespect there is cooperation, and even considerable amity. Considering the completely opposed value systems of the two worlds, this is, indeed, the only way in which the two peoples could meet and still retain a separate identity. The reasons for the meeting taking place at all, as we have already seen, are circumstantial—the historical invasion of the forest by the villagers, and their use of the Mbuti as guides; the continued parasitism of the Mbuti upon the villagers long after the original need for cooperation had gone; the contemporary mutual convenience of economic exchange; sheer territorial propinquity. These reasons do not lead automatically or easily to a structured relationship, particularly when the values of the two peoples are so divergent, so while a form of joking relationship helps to stabilize the alliance, maintaining the combination of Radcliffe-Brown's "conjunctive and disjunctive components," it is not by itself enough.

C We have seen the methods by which the villagers have sought to
563 further stabilize the situation, through a formal economic-exchange
177 system, a fictive parallel-kinship system, and through introduction to
608 village supernatural sanctions by establishment of magico-religious
881 bonds through *karé* blood brotherhood and *nkumbi* initiation. Any
439 one of these, had it worked, would have reduced the Mbuti to sub-
P ordination, yet this plainly has not been done. The defense of the
*177 Mbuti has lain in their own indigenous forest system, which works
439 not only to maintain internal cohesion but also to maintain the ut-
• 621 most possible structural distance from the village world while allowing a minimal amount of "mutually convenient" economic exchange.

P C 121

Let us look, then, at these same structural elements, having just considered them in their forest context, and place them in a village context.

P 621 • 221 648 C 563

1. THE TERRITORIAL BAND, while in no way lessening the efficiency of the hunting band, and while still preserving band unity through the concept of territory and the use of an age-level system, presents to the village system only disunity and flux. The flux that is a natural part, it seems, of the seasonal fission and fusion of all Mbuti bands renders it next to impossible for any form of village authority to be exerted over the Mbuti, either as bands or as individuals. The preference of the Mbuti for marrying into distant bands, and of thenceforth maintaining an exchange of visits and even of membership with these bands, directly counters the authority of the villagers, which is based on localized lineages and is therefore itself localized. The Mbuti are as likely as not to exchange visits with each other over distances that exceed not only the territorial limits of the clans of the village tribes but even of the tribes themselves, between which there are no political relationships except hostility. In view of the lengths to which the Mbuti carry the joking relationship, if it can be called that,[6] it is not surprising that they find it convenient to maintain their bands in such constant and otherwise unnecessary flux. The Mbuti constantly raid village plantations, openly ridicule the villagers, and steal from under their noses, unless the villagers are particularly generous. I have not met a single villager, even among those most popular with the Mbuti, who has not complained of being "eaten," and complained at the same time of the impossibility of applying legal sanctions over tribal boundaries.

P [582] [574]

P [579]

P 621 561 613

2. AGE divides the hunting band into significant horizontal sections crosscutting all lineal considerations.[7] The emphasis on age is con-

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[6] The Mbuti in their own parlance regard the village as a place to hunt and eat. They say "in the forest we hunt, in the village we hunt" (*subandura su wendi, subananji su wendi*), also, equally frequently, "We eat animals, we eat villagers" (*Sule banyama, sule Batubanji*"). Hunting calls for trickiness, cunning, using tactics appropriate to the game, often imitating it and assimilating, temporarily, its personality. Such tactics in the village include bringing in a certain amount of meat as bait, performing some service, and occupying a generally subservient position. When asked why he forced his son to take part in the *nkumbi* initiation at the hands of the villagers, one father said, simply, "When we hunt elephant we cover ourselves with elephant dung" (*Su wendi bambongu su pati mavi nda'bo*).

[7] Turner (1957), following Gluckman (1954), finds among the Ndembu, a society that is mobile and fissionable, also lacking the more formal political institutions, an essential crosscutting of opposed groups. He also found, as we have found, that (Turner 1957, p. 289) ". . . links of kinship and of political and economic co-operation *per se*

P
621 sistent as a major principle of organization in all realms of Mbuti
561 life, with a consequent lack of interest in lineage. This adds both to
613 the compositeness of the band and to its fluid structure. The division
of authority renders the band, at any stage of its existence, without
the slightest trace of individual leadership other than fictive to which
P the village headmen or chiefs could relate. Even more important, it
621 means that the band has no constant kin grouping by which it can be
613 related to the village unilineal descent group claiming hereditary
*177 ownership over a comparable Mbuti group. The comparable Mbuti
571 group only exists in the minds of the villagers, and functions among
C them as an institutionalized means of regulating intervillage disputes
563 over Mbuti "ownership." The effect of placing a horizontally divided
613 hunting band in a vertically divided village is fragmentation. The
177 only effective relationships, even when the Mbuti happen to be in a
village where their *kpara* resides, are interpersonal. The loyalties that
the Mbuti feels toward an age group are negated by the lineal loyalties of the villager, and conversely.

Again the Mbuti employ the joking relationship to their advantage. They invoke claims upon *kpara, karé,* and "kin" without the slightest compunction, but when the same claims are reversed, they either deny or ridicule them.

P 3. TERRITORY, which acts in one respect as a focus of band unity,
621 is the only principle that also, in this limited respect, offers any mea-
*177 sure of consistency in intergroup contact. Thus while the villagers
C in any given village may never be sure of just which Mbuti they will be
563 dealing with in the adjacent hunting territory, they are always able to
177 look to that territory for *some* Mbuti. There is, in fact, a reasonable
continuity within the band, achieved by territorial considerations, and
this helps stabilize relationships with the neighboring village to some
P
[186] extent. But in its wider extension, as the forest, territory only serves
to unite the Mbuti in common opposition to all villagers.

P
186 4. NOISE is associated with the village, and noise is associated with
577 death. The term *akami* is used together with the terms *bulé* or *tupé*

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P are insufficiently strong to hold together village and nation." The "consciousness of na-
621 tional unity" (*ibid.*) that exists among the Ndembu nonetheless is, according to Turner,
561 because that unity is moral rather than political, its source lying in the value system.
613 In considering Mbuti society we have to think of opposition within the forest society, such as that created by the age-level system, and within the total society, such as that created by the "kinship" system. At each level there are indeed opposed groups, with crosscutting membership. The absence of a common value system between forest and village, further, is accompanied by a corresponding absence of a wider unity.

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754

cannot offer absolute sanctuary, for each one of these villagers brings with him *akami* and, even worse, the threat of witchcraft and sorcery. In the last resort, then, the only recourse of the Mbuti will be to learn to master these arts themselves, unless in time they learn to discern between the possibilities of the one as a legal mechanism and the practical ineffectiveness of the other as a physical threat.

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In other areas of the forest, where the village tribes are less afraid of the forest, living and hunting in it themselves, as well as cultivating, the attempted exploitation of the Mbuti has been no less and its general pattern and degree of success have been similar, but there has not been the same attempt by villagers to assimilate the Mbuti. This seems to be true not only in the northern part of the Congo, but also further west and in the Gabon.[11] But while in those areas the hunters may not be assimilated into the village system to the extent of being admitted to initiation, they are also, it seems, more ready to accept village beliefs such as those in witchcraft and sorcery, and are evidently more dependent upon the villagers in other respects. However, these areas need considerably more investigation before any useful comparisons can be made. Here it is sufficient to stress that in a situation where the village cultivators are afraid of the forest and unwilling to move freely within it and exploit it, and perhaps correlated with that fact, the Mbuti maintain a form of social organization based on recognizable principles that plainly have a dual function—the maintenance of internal order and the maintenance of separation and distinction from the villagers. In such a situation, the Mbuti adopt only the outer form of the village social organization while in the village, in a form of joking relationship between the two groups. The joking relationship and the dual function of the Mbuti principles of organization effectively counter all attempts of the villagers to effect an institutional subordination of the Mbuti. The value systems of the two people are in complete opposition, and this reflects the whole nature of the relationship between them. The ultimate attempt of the villagers to assert supernatural authority over the Mbuti, while derided by the Mbuti as *bulé*, or empty (but malevolent), might be a cause of Mbuti willingness to undergo the *nkumbi* initiation, as a means of acquiring power through assimilation of like power, to combat this authority.

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On the other hand it might be argued that the villagers, in initiat-

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[11] Information on the relationship of the pygmies of the Gabon to the village cultivators was supplied by Mr. Leon Siroto, from unpublished field notes.

C
563 ing the Mbuti, are not only trying to subject the Mbuti to the authority of village supernatural sanctions but are also trying to assimilate from the Mbuti some of the spiritual power they believe to reside in the forest.

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*177
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• 621
· 648
The ultimate nature of the relationship between the two people cannot be determined until further studies have been made of similar situations from both the Mbuti point of view and, a major need at the moment, from the village point of view. For now, it seems sufficiently clear that the general nature of the relationship is one of opposition, and that Mbuti society, in response to the demands of the situation or by fortuitous chance, meets it with an organization based upon the
C
[621]
very antithesis of village organization. Against political centralization it offers complete decentralization and diffusion of authority. Against a sedentary, patrilineal, patrilocal village it matches the nomadic, nonlineal, territorial band. The vertical village kinship system is countered by a horizontal age-level system. Village values are directly opposed by forest values. And within itself Mbuti society uses these same principles, in a state of almost perpetual flux, to maintain a cohesion fully as powerful as that found among the villagers. Instead
P
C
[181]
of looking to the more conventional structural principles for the source of unity of Mbuti society, we have had to look rather to values, and it is in terms of values that the over-all society, of Mbuti and villagers, has its ultimate being and significance.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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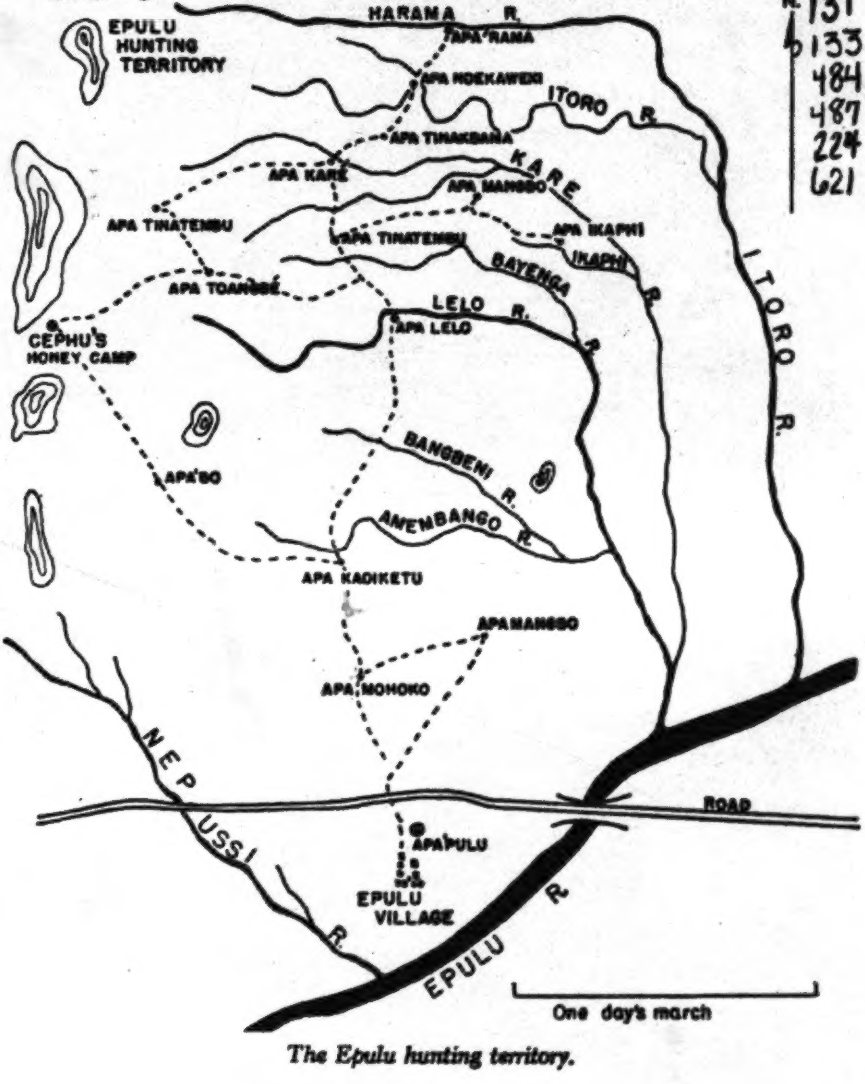
621

**MAP 6**


EPULU
HUNTING
TERRITORY
N.
HARAMA R.
APA'RANA
APA MOEKAWEKI
ITORO R.
APA TINAKBANA
KARE
APA KARE
APA MANGBO
APA TINATEMBU
APA TINATEMBU
APA IKAPHI
IKAPHI R.
BAYENGA R.
APA TOANGBÉ
CEPHU'S
HONEY CAMP
LELO R.
APA LELO
ITORO R.
BANGBENI R.
APA'BO
ANEMBANGO R.
APA KADIKETU
APAMANGBO
APA MOHOKO
NEPUSSI R.
ROAD
APA'PULU
EPULU
VILLAGE
EPULU R.
One day's march

*The Epulu hunting territory.*

## TABLE 5

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### LINEAGES CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMPOSITION OF THE EPULU NET-HUNTING BAND DURING 1957–1958, NOT INCLUDING VISITORS STAYING LESS THAN THE DURATION OF ONE CAMP

| | | *married* | | *unmarried* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bambaka | | 14 | 13 | 15 |
| Bandohwa | | 1 | — | 3 |
| Bi | | — | 2 | 4 |
| Bokele | (1) | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | (2) | 9 | 5 | 11 |
| | (3) | — | 1 | — |
| Bolima | | 2 | — | — |
| Bomasua | | 3 | 8 | 8 |
| Bongwana | | 2 | 5 | 5 |
| Buela | | 1 | 1 | — |
| Bwango | | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Meki | | — | 2 | 2 |
| Molomba | | — | 2 | 1 |
| Ngamo | | 5 | — | 7 |
| Pasama | | — | 1 | — |
| Pokama | | 1 | — | 4 |
| Pokbaya | | 2 | 2 | 5 |
| Poté | | — | 1 | — |
| Poteba | | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| Potola | | 1 | 2 | — |
| Poya | | 2 | — | 5 |
| Puemi | (1) | 5 | 4 | 7 |
| | (2) | 6 | 3 | 12 |
| Pukena | | — | 2 | 2 |
| Puma | | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| Pumasa | | — | 1 | — |
| Pusa | | — | 2 | 5 |
| Pusei | | — | 1 | 1 |
| Tisi | | — | — | 1 |
| Ungbausu | | 3 | — | 7 |
| *Totals:* | | 65 | 66 | 121 |

Individual members mentioned in text by name are indicated on Table 4. 613 621 •

To get some idea of the extent of mobility from band to band, the figures in Table 5 (total) should be compared with figures that could be reasonably expected to apply to an average-sized camp of this band; i.e., of 17 huts, each containing a married couple and three or four unmarried children. 162

Any one such "average" camp would be composed of little more than a quarter of all those who, at one time or another during the year, would be band members.

TABLE 8

621 FIELDS OF AUTHORITY
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554
562

| FIELDS OF AUTHORITY | Nuclear Family | Youths | Hunters | Elders |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. *Economic* | | | | |
| Hunting (Joint male/female authority among the net-hunters) | | | △ | |
| Gathering (Joint male/female authority among the net-hunters) | | | ○ | |
| Honey collecting | | | △ | |
| Exchange with village | △○ | | | |
| Industry (manufacture of material possessions) | △○ | | | |
| Camp supervision (in absence of the hunt) | | △○ | | △○ |
| 2. *Ritual* | | | | |
| Birth | △○ | | | |
| Puberty, betrothal and marriage: the *elima* | | ○ | | ○ |
| Death: the *molimo* | | △ | | △ |
| 3. *Legal* | | | | |
| Conjugal harmony | △○ | | | |
| Individual disputes (personal insults, abuse, failure to share food or property, etc.) | | | △○ | |
| Group disputes (any of the former that become enlarged beyond the realm of those directly concerned) | | | | △○ |

Thus distribution of authority according to age and sex is almost equal as follows:

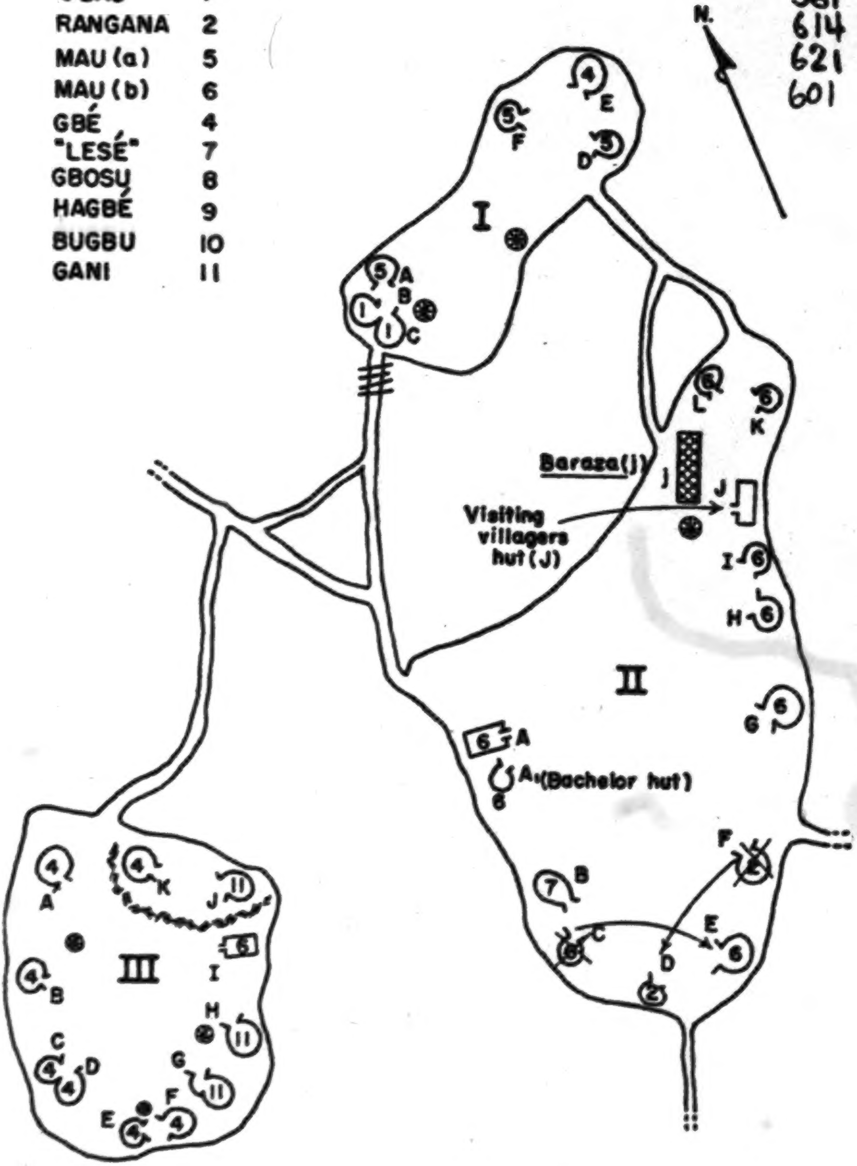
| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Family: | 4 | Male: | 12 |
| Youths: | 3 | Female: | 11 |
| Hunters: | 4 | | |
| Elders: | 4 | | |

[P.346]

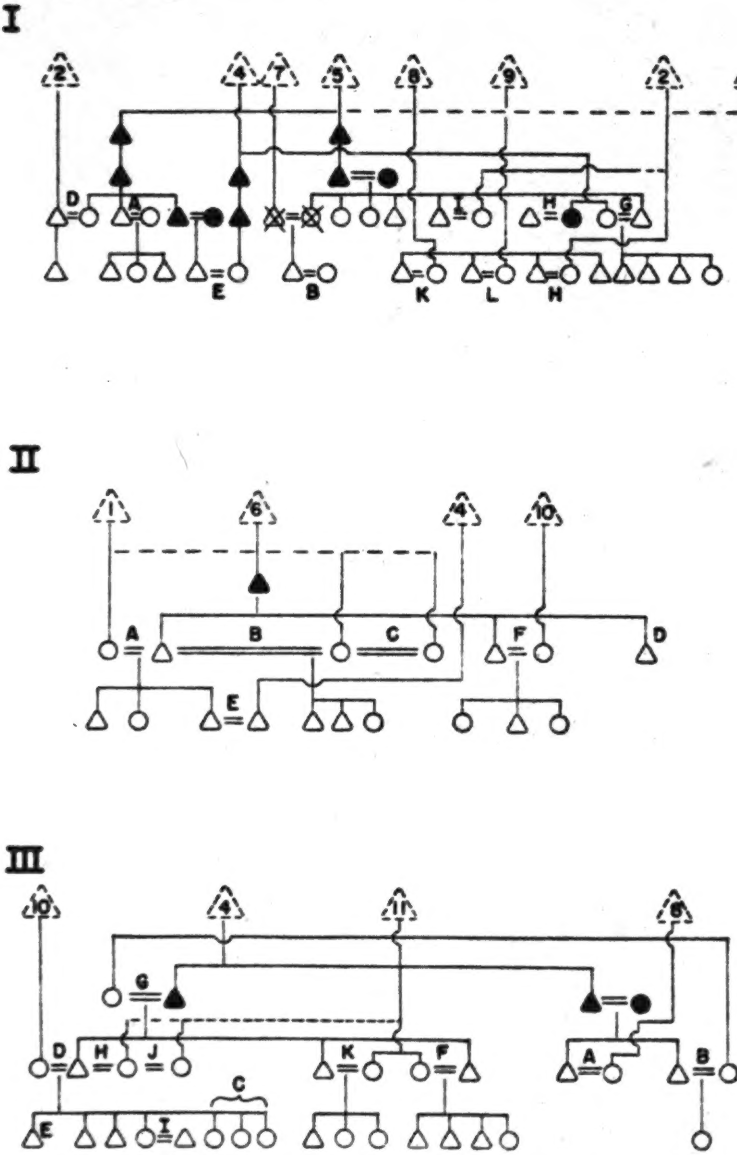
## Plan 4a

| | |
|---|---|
| G'BAO | 1 |
| RANGANA | 2 |
| MAU (a) | 5 |
| MAU (b) | 6 |
| GBÉ | 4 |
| "LESÉ" | 7 |
| GBOSU | 8 |
| HAGBÉ | 9 |
| BUGBU | 10 |
| GANI | 11 |

361
614
621 •
601


N.
I
II
III
Baraza (J)
Visiting villagers hut (J)
A₁ (Bachelor hut)
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
J
K
L

361
614
601
621 •


I
2
4
7
5
8
9
2
6
D
A
I
H
G
E
B
K
L
H
II
1
6
4
10
A
B
C
F
D
E
III
10
4
11
8
G
D
H
J
K
F
A
B
C
E
I

Plan 4a–m *Hunting camps of net-hunters and archers other than at Epulu, showing composition.*

[P.348]

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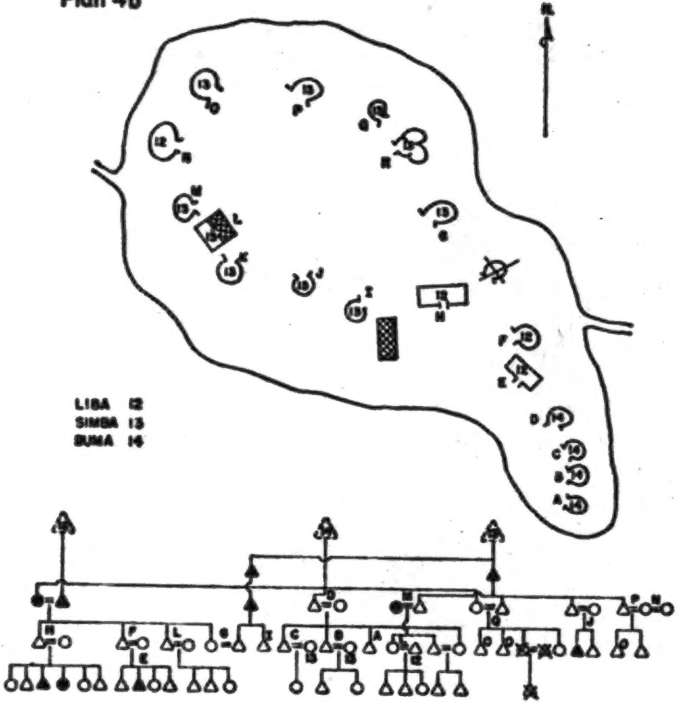
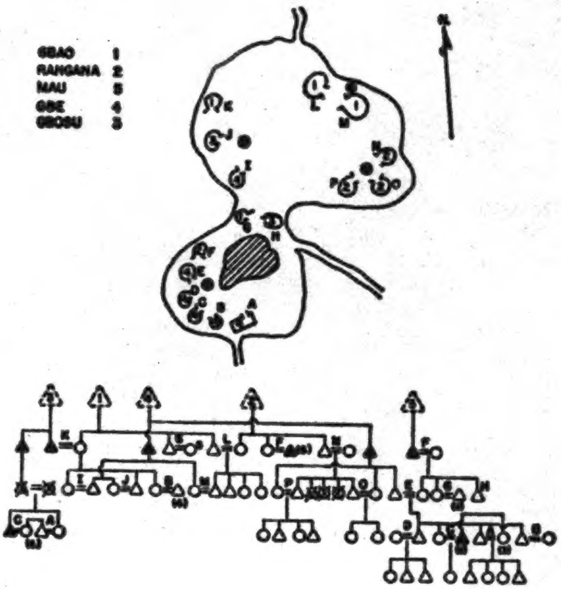
**Plan 4b**

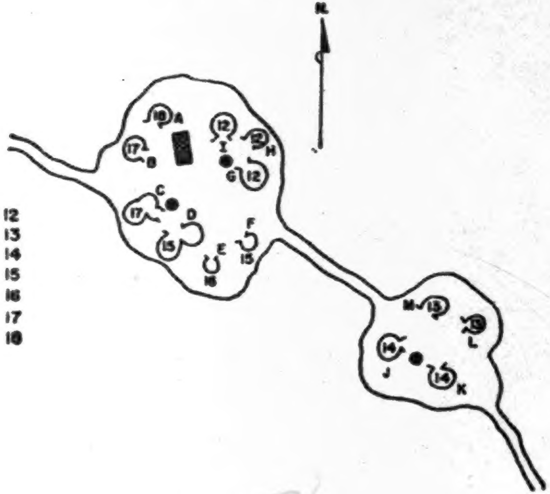

N
13 O
13 P
12 Q
12 R
12 N
13 M
15 L
13 K
13 G
13 J
13 I
12 H
F 12
E 12
D 14
C 14
B 14
A 14
LIBA 12
SIMBA 13
BUMA 14
14
13
13
H
F
E
L
G
I
C
B
A
13
13
12
O
N
D
Q
J
P
R

**Plan 4c**

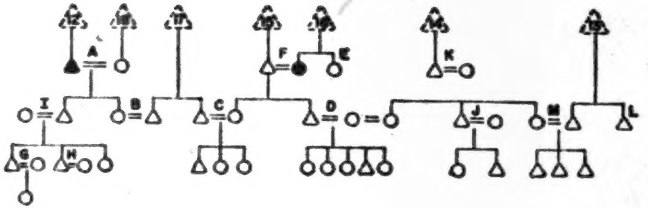

N
GBAO 1
RANGANA 2
MAU 3
GBE 4
GBOSU 5
K
L 1
M 1
J
I
N
P
O
G
H
F
E
D
C
B
A
K
L
E
M
F
I
J
B
N
P
Q
G
H
D
C
A
B

[P.349]

## Plan 4d


N.
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
J
K
L
M

| | |
|---|---|
| LIBA | 12 |
| SIMBA | 13 |
| BUMA | 14 |
| FUMA | 15 |
| BOLO | 16 |
| KONJO | 17 |
| SOKA | 18 |


A
B
C
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G
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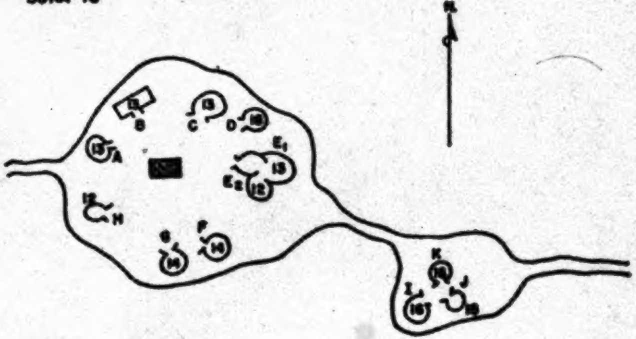
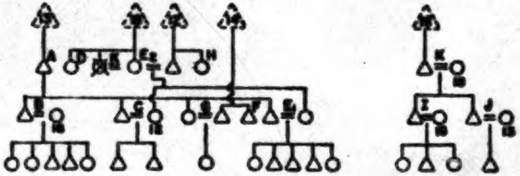
L
M

## Plan 4e

| | |
|---|---|
| LIBA | 12 |
| SIMBA | 13 |
| BUMA | 14 |
| BOLO | 16 |
| SOKA | 18 |

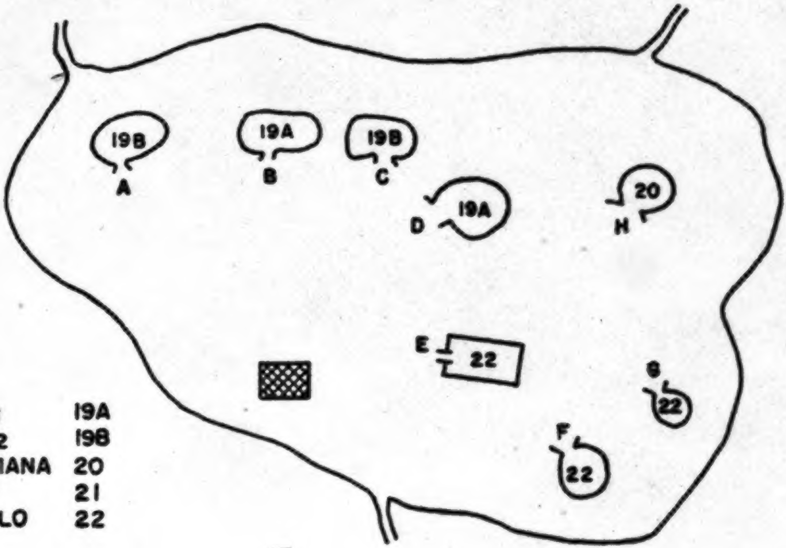

N.
A
B
C
D
E1
E2
F
G
H
I
J
K


A
B
C
D
E1
E2
F
G
H
I
J
K

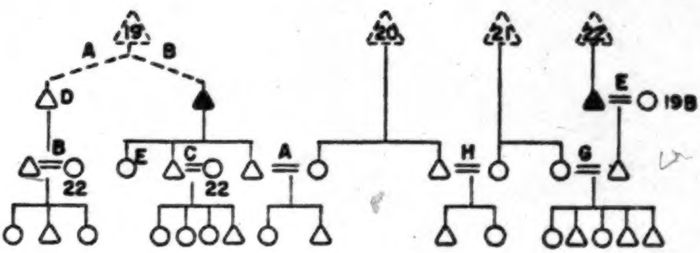
361
604
614
621

## Plan 4f

361
601
614
• 621


19B
A
19A
B
19B
C
D
19A
20
H
E
22
G
22
F
22

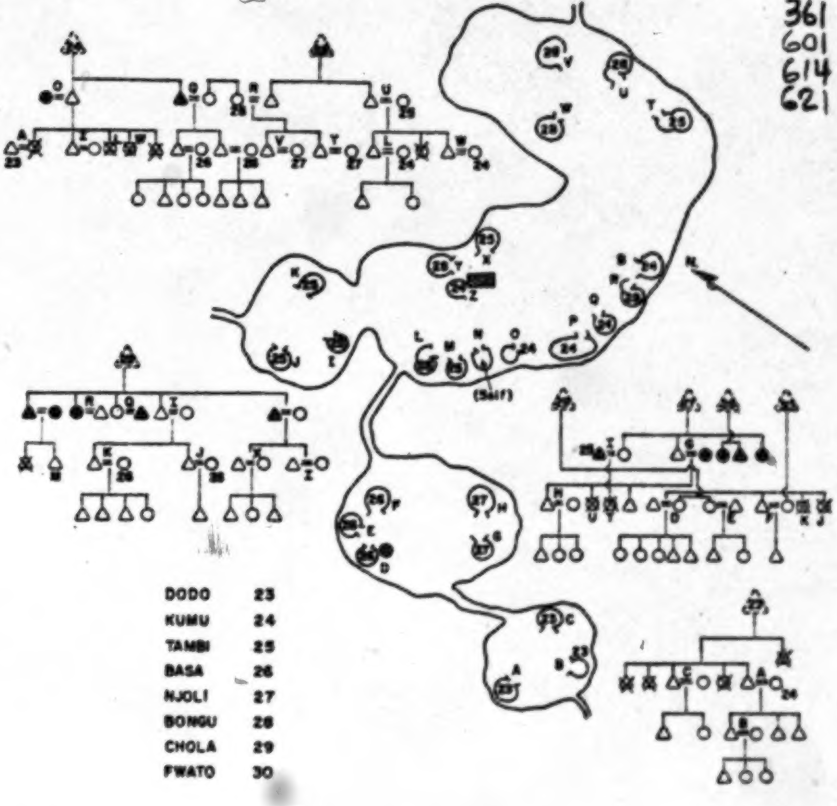
| | |
|---|---|
| KIMA1 | 19A |
| KIMA2 | 19B |
| PIPUTIANA | 20 |
| DOLÉ | 21 |
| TOBOLO | 22 |


19
A
B
20
21
22
D
E
19B
B
22
E
C
22
A
H
G

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Plan 4g.

361
601
614
621 ●



| | |
|---|---|
| DODO | 23 |
| KUMU | 24 |
| TAMBI | 25 |
| BASA | 26 |
| NJOLI | 27 |
| BONGU | 28 |
| CHOLA | 29 |
| FWATO | 30 |

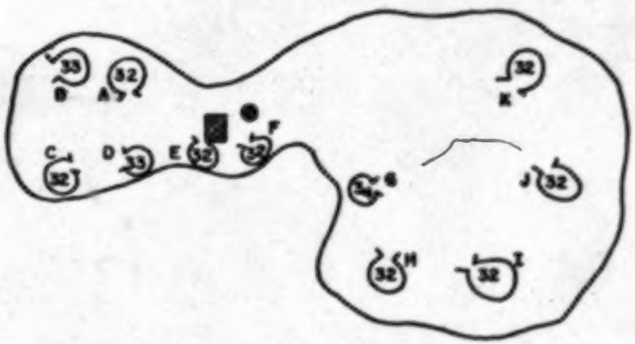
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 Mbuti

[P.352]

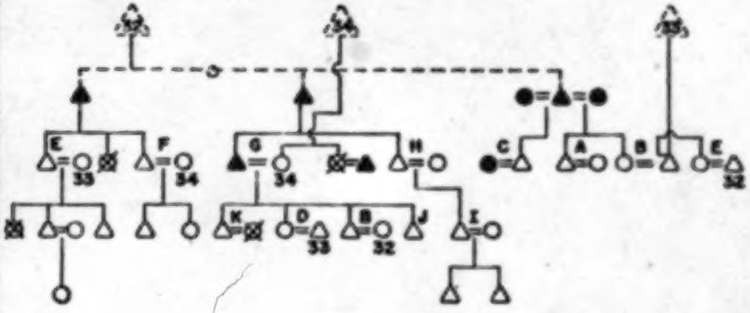
361
201
614
621

## Plan 4h

| | |
|---|---|
| SEMBI | 32 |
| POKU | 33 |
| LINDA | 34 |



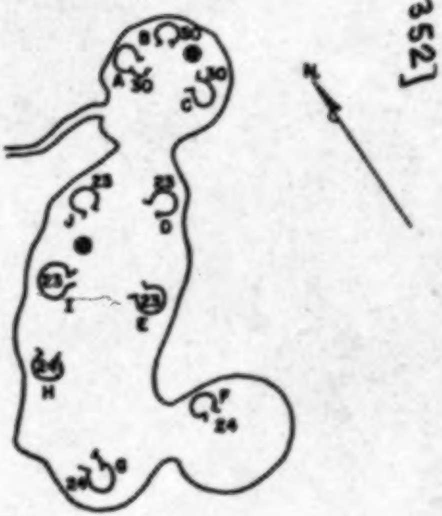
33
32
B
A
32
K
F
C
D
33
E
32
32
32
34
G
J
32
32
H
32
I



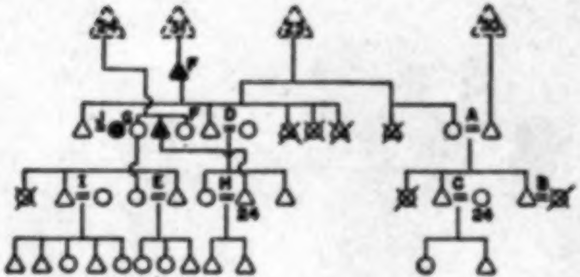
32
34
33
E
33
F
34
G
34
H
C
A
B
E
32
K
D
33
B
32
J
I

## Plan 4i

| | |
|---|---|
| DODO | 23 |
| KUMU | 24 |
| FWATO | 30 |
| DENA | 31 |



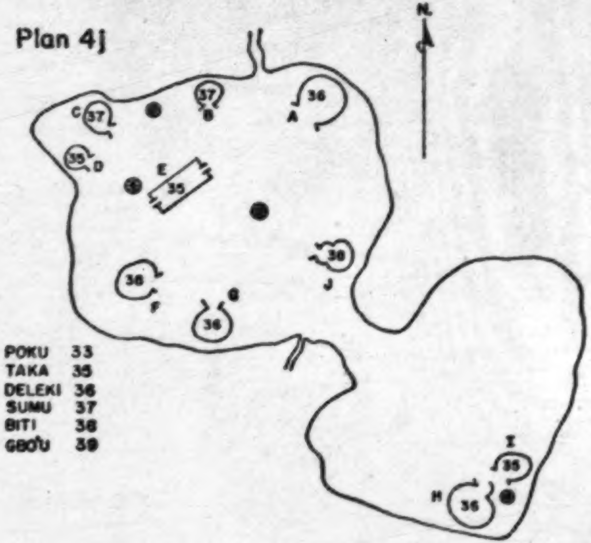
N
B
30
A
30
30
C
23
J
23
D
23
I
23
E
24
H
F
24
24
G



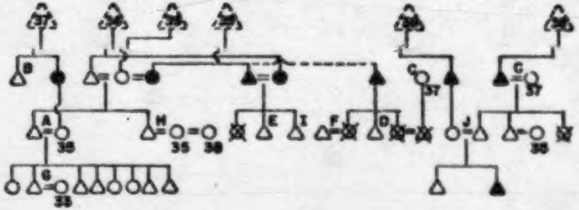
24
31
23
30
F
J
G
F
D
A
I
E
H
24
C
24
B

[P. 353]

## Plan 4j


N.
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
J
35
36
37
38

| | |
|---|---|
| POKU | 33 |
| TAKA | 35 |
| DELEKI | 36 |
| SUMU | 37 |
| BITI | 38 |
| GBOʼU | 39 |


37
36
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A
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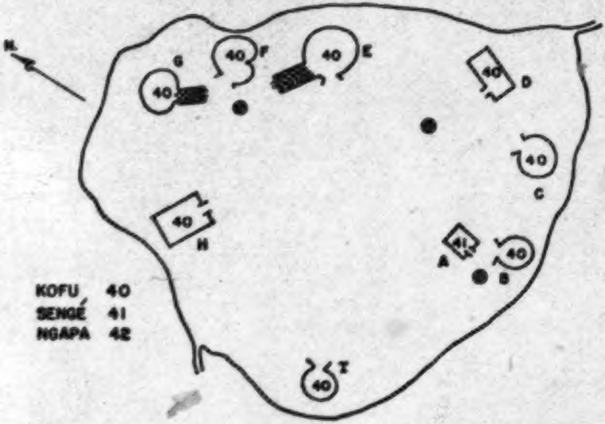
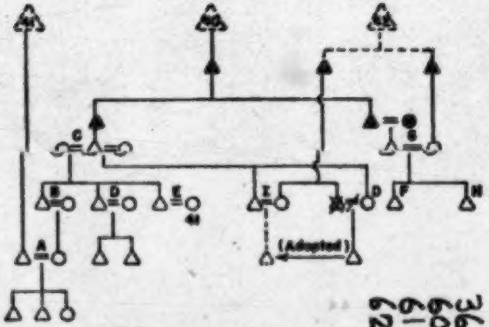
38
E
I
F
D
C
37
J
G
33

## Plan 4k


N.
G
F
E
D
C
H
A
B
I
40
41

| | |
|---|---|
| KOFU | 40 |
| SENGÉ | 41 |
| NGAPA | 42 |

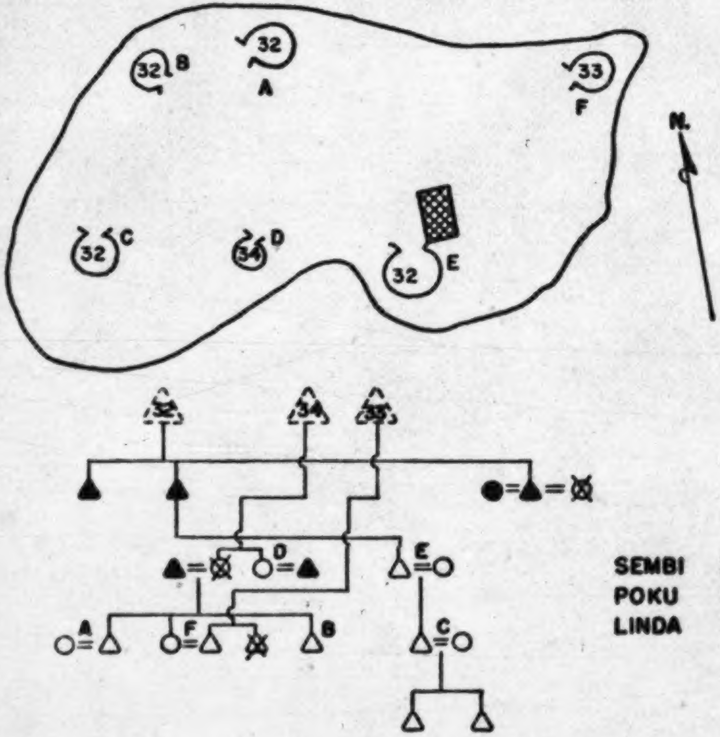

41
40
42
G
S
B
D
E
41
I
37
D
F
H
A
(Adopted)

361
601
614
621

361
601
614
621

[P. 354]

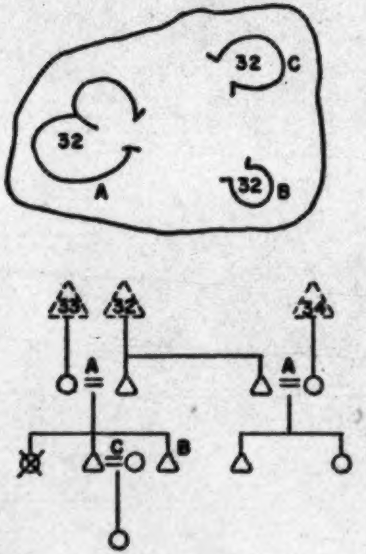
## Plan 4L



32 B
32 A
33 F
32 C
34 D
32 E
N.
32
34
33
D
E
A
F
B
C

| | |
|---|---|
| SEMBI | 32 |
| POKU | 33 |
| LINDA | 34 |

## Plan 4m



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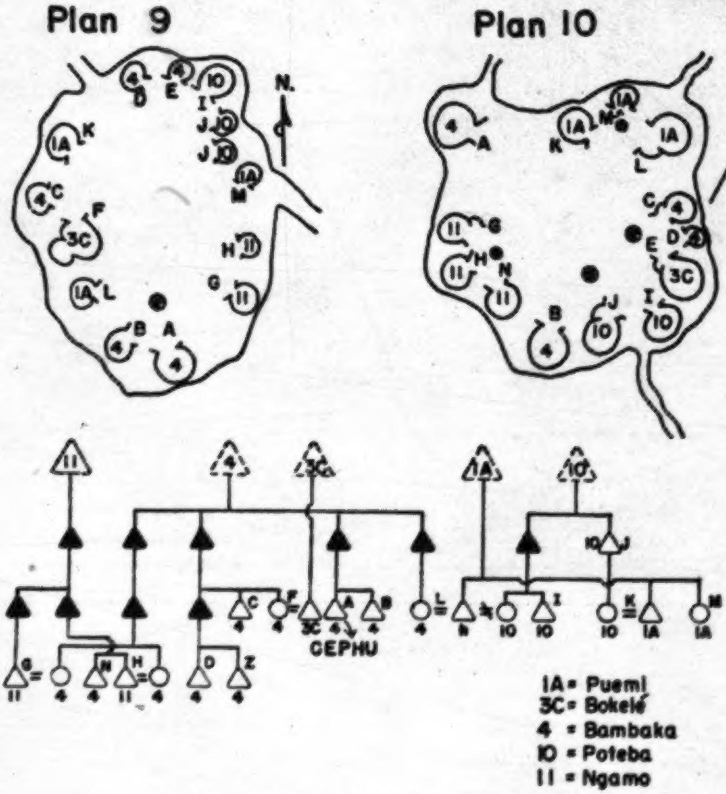
Plan 9
Plan 10
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CEPHU
1A = Puemi
3C = Bokelé
4 = Bambaka
10 = Poteba
11 = Ngamo

[601]

*Cephu's camp before (Plan 9) and after (Plan 10) his hunting offense.*

[P.360 is blank]

[*Plan 11 is located inside back cover.*]

156 888 cap and may even endanger the safety of the group. Hence there are numerous legends of old people's being left to die if they cannot keep up with the group as it moves from camp to camp. Like old Tungana, Sau knew this, and although she was still healthy she made sure everyone knew it by taking the most vigorous and unexpected part in any dispute, her sharp acid voice betraying a certain bitterness at the way she was treated. For not only was Sau old, she was also almost alone, with only her son and daughter near her, while everyone else had brothers, sisters, cousins, parents, children and grandchildren.

The Negroes said that Sau was a witch and should be killed or
[754] driven away. I used to look at her, squatting over the fire outside her hut, knees hunched up to her chin, staring silently into the middle of the camp. She certainly seemed sinister, as she gazed without blinking, taking in everything that was going on, not moving hour after hour. Her son Amabosu, the great singer, had those same staring eyes, and at times looked even more like a witch than his
[123] mother did. This family nearly always built their hut next to mine, and I came to be very fond of them.

621 If these names are confusing to the reader, they at least help to
578 give a picture of the apparent confusion created in any Pygmy camp
[583] by the complicated network of intermarriage and sister-exchange. Essentially a camp is a happy-go-lucky, friendly place, but it is also full of all sorts of little tensions that can suddenly become magnified out of all proportion and lead to full-scale disputes.

621 This particular group was a rather large one, consisting of the two main families—that of Njobo and Masisi, Tungana and Manyalibo; and that of Ekianga and his relatives, including Sau and Amabosu. But to add to the tensions there was a third group which was constantly trying to attach itself. It was intermarried heavily with the other two, as often happens in an attempt to strengthen bonds and establish an unbreakable relationship.

## THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

The leader of this group—although with Pygmies it is always un- 156 621 wise to talk of single "leaders"—was a wily but rather naïve Pygmy 551 by the name of Cephu. Most Pygmies use their real names among themselves, but they all have additional names, in KiNgwana, by which they are known to the Negroes. Cephu always used his KiNgwana name, pronounced just slightly differently from the Negro equivalent, Sefu. No matter what language they are speaking, the [194] Pygmies always retain their own peculiar intonation, which renders the language almost incomprehensible to non-Pygmies.

Cephu's family was large, but not large enough, even with all his 156 in-laws, to form a hunting group of his own. To do this you have 571 621 to have at the very least six or seven individual families, each with its own hunting net; only in this way can you have an efficient net-hunt, with the women and children driving the animals into the long circle of nets, joined end to end. Cephu's group was usually not more than four families, and so he tacked himself onto Njobo and Ekianga. Sometimes this worked out well enough, as Pygmies are great people [574] for visiting their relatives, and one or the other group might be depleted by absences. But at other times they would have a number of families visiting them, and then the addition of Cephu and all his relatives made the whole group far too large and unwieldy. But as he had taken the precaution of exchanging sisters, he could not be refused, and so he would make his own little camp close by connected by a narrow trail. He would follow the others whenever they went hunting and was invariably blamed when the hunt was not a success. At night he and his family kept to themselves, seldom venturing into the main camp. They sat around their own fire, offended, aloof, and rather unhappy, but with hides as tough as that of a forest buffalo and impervious to the most obvious hints and thinly veiled insults. [538] But Cephu was the best storyteller in the forest.

Kenge's position in the group was an undefined and rather happy 115 one. His father had married a sister of Njobo and joined his wife's 602

765 Even though he[1] always
578 made his camp a short distance off it was close enough to be thought
152 of as the same camp, and whether or not we appreciated his presence
• 621 we thought of his camp and ours as being the same. Even his unwillingness to take part in the molimo was accepted, to maintain some semblance of unity; but this sudden statement made it impossible to ignore Cephu's feeling of rivalry any longer. Rather than cause an open breach, everyone in the main camp kept his thoughts to himself and was silent.

224 About an hour after dawn, four or five youths with their nets and
372 spears went off to light the hunting fire. I went with them, and only when we had crossed the Lelo and were on the other side did they speak. Then it was about trivialities, and soon they were chatting and laughing as though nothing were wrong. Shortly afterward we were joined by half a dozen of the younger married men, the most active hunters, and we lit the fire at the top of the hill. Leaves and twigs were piled around the base of a young tree, and an ember brought from the camp set them ablaze. More leaves were thrown on so that dense clouds of smoke went billowing up to the invisible sky, until finally the flames burst through with a great roar of victory.
[182] There was no great ritual or ceremonial, but somehow this act put the hunters in harmony with the forest and secured its blessing and assistance for the day's hunt. The Pygmies regard fire as the most precious gift of the forest, and by offering it back to the forest they are acknowledging their debt and their dependence.

224 As we sat around waiting for the others, one or two couples passed
[222] by. They were going ahead so they would have extra time for gathering mushrooms on the way. They paused to chat and then walked
224 on, lightly, swiftly, and gaily. Before long the main body of hunters
372 arrived and asked where Cephu was. We had not seen him. It
578 seemed that he had left the camp shortly after us but instead of
156 passing by the hunting fire had followed a different path. Someone suggested that he was building a fire of his own. This brought cries

[1] [i.e., Cephu. - Analyst]

224 Manyalibo stood up and began a rather pompous statement of
765 how everyone wanted this camp to be a good camp, and how every-
578 one wanted the molimo to be a good molimo, with lots of singing,
156 lots of eating, and lots of smoking. But Cephu never took part in the molimo, he pointed out. And Cephu's little group never contributed to the molimo basket. Manyalibo went on, listing the various ways in which Cephu had defaulted and made the camp into a bad camp instead of a good camp, and the molimo a bad molimo. And now, he added, Cephu had made the hunt a bad hunt. He recalled how on the first day, even before the camp was built, we had been presented with an antelope by the forest, but how ever since Cephu had joined us things had gone from bad to worse.

224 Cephu tried to interject that the molimo was really none of his
765 business. At this Masisi, who had befriended him over the chair
578 incident, and who had relatives in his camp, rounded on him sharply.
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593 He reminded Cephu that he had been glad enough to accept help and food and song when his daughter had died; now that his "mother" had died, why did he reject her? Cephu replied that Balekimito was not his mother. This was what everyone was waiting for. Not only did he name the dead woman, an unheard-of offense,
[602] but he denied that she was his mother. Even though there was only
[621] the most distant relationship, and that by marriage, it was equivalent to asserting that he did not belong to the same group as Ekianga and Manyalibo and the rest.

578 Ekianga leaped to his feet and brandished his hairy fist across the
156 fire. He said that he hoped Cephu would fall on his spear and kill
152 himself like the animal he was. Who but an animal would steal meat
224 from others? There were cries of rage from everyone, and Cephu
224 burst into tears. Apparently, during the last cast of the nets Cephu,
578 who had not trapped a single animal the whole day long, had slipped
156 away from the others and set up his net in front of them. In this way

156 224 578 he caught the first of the animals fleeing from the beaters, but he had not been able to retreat before he was discovered.

I had never heard of this happening before, and it was obviously 224 a serious offense. In a small and tightly knit hunting band, survival 578 can be achieved only by the closest co-operation and by an elaborate 621 • 476 system of reciprocal obligations which insures that everyone has some share in the day's catch. Some days one gets more than others, but nobody ever goes without. There is, as often as not, a great deal of squabbling over the division of the game, but that is expected, and nobody tries to take what is not his due.

Cephu tried very weakly to say that he had lost touch with the 224 others and was still waiting when he heard the beating begin. It was 578 only then that he had set up his net, where he was. Knowing that 156 558 nobody believed him, he added that in any case he felt he deserved a better place in the line of nets. After all, was he not an important man, a chief, in fact, of his own band? Manyalibo tugged at Ekianga to sit down, and sitting down himself he said there was obviously no use prolonging the discussion. Cephu was a big chief, and a chief was [186] a villager, for the BaMbuti never have chiefs. And Cephu had his [329] own band, of which he was chief, so let him go with it and hunt elsewhere and be a chief elsewhere. Manyalibo ended a very eloquent speech with *"Pisa me taba"* ("Pass me the tobacco").

Cephu knew he was defeated and humiliated. Alone, his band 224 of four or five families was too small to make an efficient hunting 156 558 unit. He apologized profusely, reiterated that he really did not know 626 he had set up his net in front of the others, and said that in any case he would hand over all the meat. This settled the matter, and accompanied by most of the group he returned to his little camp and brusquely ordered his wife to hand over the spoils. She had little chance to refuse, as hands were already reaching into her basket and under the leaves of the roof where she had hidden some liver in anticipation of just such a contingency. Even her cooking pot was

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156 emptied. Then each of the other huts was searched and all the meat
558 taken. Cephu's family protested loudly and Cephu tried hard to
626 cry, but this time it was forced and everyone laughed at him. He
clutched his stomach and said he would die; die because he was
hungry and his brothers had taken away all his food; die because he
was not respected.

765 The kumamolimo was festive once again, and the camp seemed
621 restored to good spirits. An hour later, when it was dark and fires
264 were flickering outside every hut, there was a great blaze at the
central hearth and the men talked about the morrow's hunt. From
[201] Cephu's camp came the sound of the old man, still trying hard to
cry, moaning about his unfortunate situation, making noises that
were meant to indicate hunger. From our own camp came the jeers
of women, ridiculing him and imitating his moans.

[602] When Masisi had finished his meal he took a pot full of meat
with mushroom sauce, cooked by his wife, and quietly slipped away
into the shadows in the direction of his unhappy kinsman. The moaning
stopped, and when the evening molimo singing was at its height
[516] I saw Cephu in our midst. Like most of us he was sitting on the
[829] ground, in the manner of an animal. But he was singing, and that
meant that he was just as much a BaMbuti as anyone else.

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156
626 law Cephu had been firmly put in his place, and it was unlikely he
681 would do the same thing again in a hurry.

181 This was typical of all Pygmy life, on the surface at least. There
was a confusing, seductive informality about everything they did.
[157] Whether it was a birth, a wedding, or a funeral, in a Pygmy hunting
camp or in a Negro village, there was always an unexpectedly casual,
[621] almost carefree attitude. There was, for instance, little apparent spe-
[358] cialization; everyone took part in everything. Children had little or
no voice in adult affairs, but the only adult activities from which they
seemed to be rigidly excluded were certain songs, and of course the
[462] molimo. Between men and women there was also a certain degree of
specialization, but little that could be called exclusive.

621 There were no chiefs, no formal councils. In each aspect of Pygmy
627 life there might be one or two men or women who were more prominent than others, but usually for good practical reasons. This showed
up most clearly of all in the settling of disputes. There was no judge,
[69] no jury, no court. The Negro tribes all around had their tribunals,
but not the Pygmies. Each dispute was settled as it arose, according to
its nature.

627 Roughly, there were four ways of punishing offenses, each operat-
681 ing as an efficient deterrent but without necessitating any system of outright punishment. In a small and co-operative group no individual would want the job either of passing judgment or of administering punishment, so like everything else in Pygmy life the maintenance of law was a co-operative affair. Certain offenses, rarely committed, were considered so terrible that they would of themselves bring some form of supernatural retribution. Others became the affair of the molimo, which in its morning rampages showed public disapproval by attacking the hut of the culprit, possibly the culprit himself. Both these types of crime were extremely rare. The more serious of the
[685] other crimes, such as theft, were dealt with by a sound thrashing
which was administered co-operatively by all who felt inclined to

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578 was not a good dancer, and when he tried to illustrate the leap he
152 fell flat on his face.

[536] That was the end of the matter for Aberi. For weeks he was ridiculed, everyone asking him if he had lost his spear, or telling him to be careful not to trip and fall. But it was not quite the end of the matter for Masalito. He felt more angry than ever at his brother, because Aberi had made himself, and so the whole family, an object of ridicule. Masalito felt this an added insult to himself. Even Kelemoke was furious. So relations between the two brothers got worse and worse, and every time there was a silence in the camp Masalito would complain in a loud voice about his brother and his brother's wife.

593 At first this was tolerated, but finally it threatened to split the
578 camp in two. Masalito began naming all his friends and relatives to
152 support him in ignoring Aberi; he refused to say a word to his
• 621
626 brother. Of course his brother could claim support from the same
689 relatives and friends, and tension was spreading throughout both
camps. That was when the molimo stepped in and showed public disapproval of Masalito. The original source of the dispute, and Aberi's undoubted wrongdoing, were forgotten. Masalito was guilty of the much more serious crime of splitting the hunting band into opposing factions. He himself was then ridiculed and shamed into silence. After that it was only one or two days before the two brothers became good friends and hunting companions once again.

578 Disputes were generally settled with little reference to the alleged
626 rights and wrongs of the case, but chiefly with the intention of restor-
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834 ing peace to the community. One night Kenge slipped out of our
hut on an amorous expedition to the hut of Manyalibo, who had an
[152] attractive daughter, one of Kenge's many admirers. Shortly afterward there was a howl of rage and Kenge came flying back across the

593 At this, old Sau, who had been sitting on the ground throughout,
595 with Kamaikan's baby on her lap, handed the baby to her weeping
578 606 daughter-in-law and slowly got to her feet. Her son and Ekianga
607 were now both armed with stout sticks, about four inches thick and
887 three feet long, and they were lashing out with no reservations. Sau hobbled up to them and calmly pushed her way between; then she turned and put her head against Ekianga's stomach and her backside against her son's legs, and forced them apart. They continued trying to fight each other around the old lady, reaching out far so as not to hit her, but it was just too difficult. Ekianga was the first to throw away his weapon, which he did over Sau's head, with all his might. But Amabosu ducked and it missed him. Amabosu then threw his club on the ground and led his mother back to his hut. His wife meanwhile had been joined by Kamaikan, and they both were playing happily with the baby.

621 This incident illustrates one of the most remarkable features of
626 Pygmy life—the way everything settles itself with apparent lack
578 of organization. Co-operation is the key to Pygmy society; you can
181 expect it and you can demand it, and you have to give it. If your wife nags you at night so that you cannot sleep, you merely have to raise your voice and call on your friends and relatives to help you. Your wife will do the same, so whether you like it or not the whole camp becomes involved. At this point someone—very often an older person with too many relatives and friends to be accused of being partisan—steps in with the familiar remark that everyone is making too much noise, or else diverts the issue onto a totally different track so that people forget the origin of the argument and give it up.

621 Issues other than disputes are settled the same way, without leader-
626 ship appearing from any particular individual. If it is a matter involv-
578 ing the hunt, every adult male discusses it until there is agreement.

The women can throw in their opinions, particularly if they know 621 626
that the area the men have selected is barren of vegetable foods. But 578
the men usually know this anyway.

If the question is one of marriage, and a father announces that he 626
does not like the girl his son has chosen, his son can call on all his 593
friends to help him. If he is strong and holds out, the whole group 584
will be assembled to discuss the case. If they agree with the father, then either the boy has to give up his talk of matrimony or else make up his mind to marry the girl anyway. In the latter case he would probably go and live with her hunting group. But it is seldom that things come to such a pass.

In fact, Pygmies dislike and avoid personal authority, though they 626
are by no means devoid of a sense of responsibility. It is rather that 157
they think of responsibility as communal. If you ask a father, or a 181
husband, why he allows his son to flirt with a married girl, or his wife to flirt with other men, he will answer, "It is not my affair," and he is right. It is *their* affair, and the affair of the other men and women, and of their brothers and sisters. He will try to settle it himself, either by argument or by a good beating, but if this fails he brings everyone else into the dispute so that he is absolved of personal responsibility.

If you ask a Pygmy why his people have no chiefs, no lawgivers, 621
no councils, or no leaders, he will answer with misleading simplicity, 829
"Because we are the people of the forest." The forest, the great pro- 778
vider, is the one standard by which all deeds and thoughts are judged; it is the chief, the lawgiver, the leader, and the final arbitrator.

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term which could be translated as either "brother" or "sister," and 561
anyone younger is "child," though more often they are just called 601
by name. In this way a Pygmy camp is much less formal than most [621]
African societies, where there are not only different terms of address
and reference for different degrees of relationship, but also correspondingly
different modes of behavior that are enforced at all
times.

During the day one Pygmy camp looks much like another. The 000
sun filters down through the trees and brightens the camp with shafts
of spiraling light as it catches the columns of smoke drifting lazily
upward. This is what makes a camp look so full of life at midday, [512]
even when most people are out on the hunt and those that have stayed
behind are dozing in the shade of their little leaf huts. The light has
a life of its own, and after it has danced down the coils of blue smoke
it seems to leap from place to place on the leafy floor of the camp as
the trees sway in the breeze high above. And when you listen you
hear life in myriad forms all around—birds, monkeys, bees; the
rustling of a nearby stream and the never-ending voice of the forest
itself. It continually whispers assurances that all is well, that the
forest is looking after its children.

In a village the heat of day is unbearably, suffocatingly oppressive, 512
but in the forest it is just warm enough to make you want to stretch 513 132
out and bask in the dancing, shady sunlight, like other living creatures.
But the Pygmies have learned from the animals around them to doze 512
with one eye open, and a sleepy midday camp can become filled in 513
a minute with shouts and yells and tearful protestations as a baby, 854
crawling around this warm, friendly world, gets into a bed of hot
ashes, or a column of army ants. In a moment he will be surrounded
by angry adults and given a sound slapping, then carried unceremoniously
back to the safety of a hut. It does not matter much which 854
hut, because as far as the child is concerned all adults are his parents 861
or grandparents. They are all equally likely to slap him for doing 867

000 Chasse as they were put through their exercises, all obscured the faint chirpings of crickets and birds and the chatter of monkeys.
361 And as the sun rose and began to beat down on the parched and
241 scorched earth, the village asserted once more its determination to
512 dominate the hostile world around it.
[313] The men went off to cut down more trees for more houses and bigger plantations, and the women went to hoe and cultivate the small fields so laboriously prepared, which after another one or two years of hard work would have to be abandoned. For the soil which can support the primeval forest with luxurious ease refuses to bear fruit to the crops of the villagers for more than three consecutive years.

361 In the neighborhood of the Epulu there were, in fact, several vil-
177 lages. Some twenty-five years earlier, when Patrick Putnam first
621 came to the spot and decided to settle there, there were none. He built his home with the help of various men of different tribes whom he took around with him to assist him in his work. Some were from villages several hundred miles away. They called in other helpers, and gradually the village of Camp Putnam came into being. A pretty, straggling village, neat huts dotted haphazardly either side of a gracefully curving track, just wide enough for a car to pass through to Pat's home. Even though its members came from half a dozen different tribes, it quickly assumed the characteristics of a traditional, tribal, forest village. The family feeling that is so powerful where a village consists of all the men of a single clan, their wives and children, was replaced by a common loyalty to Pat, who worked day and night in his small dispensary, saving the lives of the people he loved and, in the end, giving his own. Pat acted as chief in nearly all respects. Disputes were brought to him and he settled them, wisely and justly, according to the tribal laws he knew so well. The village began to attract Pygmies, who gradually attached themselves, again in a perfectly traditional manner.

To a lesser extent this was so even with the new and distinctly

commercial village that was set up on the roadside, by the govern- 361
ment, immediately after Pat's death. The main focus of the village 177
was not, as in so many villages, in either special plantations or road 621
work, but in the Station de Chasse. This, with its collection of live forest animals, became an attraction for wealthy tourists with time and money enough to make the trip from Stanleyville or Beni; hence the optimistic Belgian who built the motel directly opposite. A little farther up the road, away from the river, were the houses of several hundred workers. This village stretched right up to the entrance of Camp Putnam, and beyond was the Hotel de Bière and a line of a half-dozen or so stores. The majority of these villagers, as in Camp Putnam, were from distant districts and from many different tribes. But here they had nobody to hold them together, as Putnam had his workers; their disputes were settled arbitrarily, according to Belgian notions of right and wrong. It was a village filled with jealousies, [578]
deep-seated grievances and smoldering hatred.

A few kilometers to each side of the Epulu River were two tradi- 361
tional villages. To the west was Dar es Salaam. The name was 181
brought from the coast by the slave-traders, and its inhabitants were 175
all descendants of the almost universally disliked BaNgwana, who had sold their souls to the traders and helped them in the capture of
slaves and the theft of ivory. The headman of Dar es Salaam was a [622]
friendly rogue, Musafili. About two kilometers away from Dar es [563]
Salaam was the camp of Musafili's Pygmies. Like every other Negro he referred to "his" Pygmies as though they were chattels. Although Dar es Salaam always offered the warmest hospitality, I never felt at ease there. The heritage of a bloody and treacherous past was only barely dormant, and the BaNgwana are suspected today, as they always have been, of practicing the most dreaded forms of witchcraft and sorcery.

A little farther to the other side of the Epulu was a very different 361
village, and one much more typical of the traditional settlement in

361 [103] this area. It was named Eboyo, and the villagers belonged to the
[101] BaBira tribe, predominant in the southern and central Ituri. Here
• 621 there were two chiefs—the traditional chief, Sabani, and the govern-
622 ment-appointed chief, Kapamba. Kapamba's job was to see that the
648 right crops were planted, harvested, and marketed to the Belgian
439 government, and that the taxes were collected and paid over. The Belgian policy was largely to let the people in this rather difficult and unprofitable part of the Congo live as they had always lived. The only stipulations were that they should live peacefully, and that in addition to their own small plantations they should cultivate more ground for crops which would both help to feed immigrant labor forces, such as the road gangs and the workers at Station de Chasse, and be of commercial value to the Belgians in the world market for such products as cotton, palm oil and groundnuts.

622 Kapamba was not a popular figure. He was small and pathetically
554 ugly. His hut was at the very far end of the village, behind a large hillock on the top of which stood his baraza. Only his close relatives and a few Pygmies lived near him.

In the village proper, Sabani's house was in the center. Sabani was a sly old man whose father had married a Lese girl, from the
[648] eastern edge of the forest. Sabani changed his tribal affiliation to suit the convenience of the moment, and the Belgians found it impossible to deal with him, so they appointed Kapamba in his place. But Sabani was still the real power in the village, and the real authority. He was also the chief ritual authority for miles around, and he was a frightening sight when painted and dressed for his role of witch doctor at the time of the nkumbi initiation ceremony. Even on
622 other occasions when he wished to be formal—such as the visit of a
554 Belgian administrator—he was no less inspiring. Ragged trousers
291 [648] came down to within a few inches of feet that were barely covered by ill-fitting shoes, slit where they pinched so as to be more comfortable. An old khaki tunic covered his bare chest, and on his head he wore

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long- 622 554
haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking 291
stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Some-
times he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his
belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, [789]
and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Gen- 622
erally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his 554
loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Be-
yond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, 622 563
but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the 249
administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they
were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani 622
also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made 273
from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all 622
times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village [554]
there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam [621] •
and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They 824
made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses 182 [361]
without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, [342]
because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and
fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor re-
quired to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits [776]
that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic ma- [241]
hogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the
villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds 175
of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When 233
they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they
brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But [241]
their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

222 gathered, but the forest gives its people honey only during two happy
262 months. It gives with even greater abundance, however, and the
honey season is a season for abandoned merry-making, when even
the cares of hunting become unimportant, as each individual, young
or old, male or female, sets off every morning in quest of this precious
gift. Above all, it is a season for rejoicing, for dancing and singing.
222 It is also a season when hunting groups split up into even smaller
621 units, each going its own way, claiming certain honey trees for its
own by marking them with a vine tied around the base or with some
other sign that they know will be respected by all other Pygmies.
Only villagers would be capable of breaking such a trust. And so it
222 is also a time when the Pygmies tell stories for the benefit of the
177 villagers of the dreadful and dangerous spirits that they have to fight
in order to get the honey. Naturally enough, then, it is a time when
the villagers prefer to leave the Pygmies, and the forest, well alone.
222 Cephu was already off on his own, slyly camping near the valley
621 that divides the territory of the Epulu Pygmies from that of the
next group to the west. He had relatives in both groups, and he felt
able to claim trees in both territories, depending on where he thought
he would do best. Those that were left split into two bands. One
set off with Ekianga, far away to the north of Kaweki's fishing camp.
There they hoped to combine good hunting with the honey quest.
[439] A few made a permanent halfway camp so that they could act as a
convenient relay station between Ekianga and the village, using the
surplus meat to obtain luxuries that would help make the season
even more festive.

222 Masisi, however, refused to have anything to do with this plan.
621 The honey season was no time to be bothered with hunting, he said,
578 and in any case he was fed up with village food and village tobacco
177 and dirty village water. He wanted to forget about the village and
eat nothing but forest food. He decided on an area that was little
frequented. There was a great deal of dissension among those who

otherwise would have followed him without question, but Masisi was 222
adamant. He said he was going anyway; whether anyone else came 621
or not did not worry him. His cousin, Manyalibo, was in a quandary. 578 177
Morally he was bound to support his relative, but he was tempted
by Ekianga's idea of getting the best of both worlds. Visions of both
meat and honey won, and he announced that he was going with
Ekianga.

Masisi with the true Pygmy sense of drama said that Manyalibo 222
was a disgrace, and that as everyone else obviously wanted to behave 621
like villagers he would go off on his own. In a loud dramatic voice 578
he commanded his wife to pack her belongings. Within an hour or
so they set off, followed by their two children, Akobo and Ageronga.
There was some discussion after they had left, and Njobo's sister,
Teningbenge, and her son Maipe, decided to follow Masisi. With [734]
them went Masamba, Njobo's wife; Njobo himself was still in Bunia
with his son, Nyange, looking after the boy who was being treated
for severe tuberculosis of the bone. The next to follow them was
old Asofalinda, who said that she wanted nothing to do with her
brother Ekianga. If Ekianga intended to waste his honey season hunting,
he could do so without her. This somewhat counterbalanced
Manyalibo's desertion of Masisi, and everyone thought it a great
idea. She packed her few things together and set off, still denouncing
Ekianga as a fool. She carried her crippled little daughter on her side 734
and her bundle slung over her back. Lizabeti was a pathetic child
whose hip had been diseased since birth. She had never walked but
had spent her ten years of life crawling around on her buttocks, dragging
one withered leg after her, using the other leg and her two
hands to swing her body along as she vainly tried to follow other
children in their games. Mambunia, Masisi's brother, himself with
a leg twisted by infantile paralysis, went limping after Asofalinda,
shouting that he would come and help her carry Lizabeti. As he 621
left, clutching a spear in one hand, he told me that Masisi would

• 621 be very glad if I came to their camp; I would find it less noisy than Ekianga's.

I asked Kenge what he wanted to do, and without hesitation he said he was going to follow Masisi. Maipe was his half-brother, and a very good friend of his, but his main reason, he said, was that he was tired of noise. He knew that Masisi's camp would be a quiet one, with lots and lots of singing and dancing. To the Pygmy, noise is synonymous with trouble, with dispute and discontent; music is [114] never referred to as noise, but rather as "rejoicing." I felt that Kenge was right, and we decided to follow the next day.

114 It was, I knew, to be my last trek into the forest with the people I had come to think of as such close friends, and even though I still had another two months to spend with them I was sad. It was partly because of this, and partly because, like Kenge, I was so profoundly content to be back in our own part of the forest, that I found the forest more beautiful than it had ever been. Kenge said it was just because it was the honey season, but as we passed the plantation and entered once more into the shade of the great friendly old trees, he added, "This is the *real* world . . . this is a good world, our forest."

We walked slowly, enjoying every minute. We passed through the plantation that Njobo and Masisi had begun to cultivate more than a year and a half earlier, and found it a ruin, happily abandoned for more worthwhile things. We skirted Apa Muhoko because Kenge said Cephu had camped there recently and it would be full of jiggers. In the deserted remains of Apa Kadiketu we stopped for a rest, sitting on a log that had once resounded to the hammering of ivory barkcloth beaters. I thought of the great molimo songs that had been sung there, and wondered if I would hear them again before I left. Beyond Apa Kadiketu we followed the path to Apa Lelo, almost to the spot where I had once seen a leopard crouching up in the trees above me. There we turned west, following an animal trail that was narrow and tangled. It led through hilly country completely new to

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527 camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ringing
517 of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex
[533] cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories
[825] about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night
535 I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have
517 drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

[778] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the
[821] forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

• 621 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred
578 in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including
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224 Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had

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sent him, their own brother, none. And why did they not come and join him? I expect that Ekianga was saying the same thing about Masisi in the south, with all his honey.

One day I decided to go and see for myself. With Kenge I set off early in the morning, but after several hours of rapid trekking we came to a deserted camp. The fires still smoked, and it had obviously not been long abandoned. We scavenged around and found two spears and a bow and some arrows that had been left behind, presumably in the hurry to get away before we arrived. There were also several baskets and pots. Armed with the more worthwhile trophies we returned to Apa Toangbe. Masisi was wild with fury at this deliberate insult. He told Kenge and me to go off again the next day and find the others, and bring him back some meat.

We found them a considerable distance away. They were thoroughly surprised, having thought we would have been shaken off and discouraged. They hurriedly tried to conceal the great amount of dried meat that had been accumulating, but they could not hide it all. So they criticized Kenge for having been so mistrustful as to sneak up on them silently from the side, instead of using the main trail.

Kenge replied that in our experience we found that main trails only led to deserted camps. He then delivered Masisi's comments in full. The comments were pithy, and Kenge added his own embellishments. He dwelt mainly on family loyalties. There was no doubt that Manyalibo was wrong; he had even taken Masisi's hunting net, promising to send meat, and had never sent any. Njobo's net was there, too, yet his sister, Maipe's mother, had received none of the meat it had trapped. Ekianga himself had sent no meat to Asofalinda.

I had expected a spirited defense, but Manyalibo slowly came out of his hut, where he was hiding, and said grandly that we could take all his meat back to Masisi; he had had enough, and anyway he had really been saving it for his "brother." He added that as for

621 578 joining Masisi, there was not much sense doing that now, as every-
224 one would probably be moving camp soon. Why didn't we all meet
[602] later somewhere near Apa Kadiketu?

Kenge and I returned, laden down with meat and protestations of friendship. Much the same thing happened when Masisi thought he would try similar tactics on Cephu. This time I went with Kelemoke, who had come to stay with us because he said he found Cephu's camp far too noisy. It was not much more than three hours away, and it was plain that Cephu had settled in well with his friends and relatives, because he was almost in the middle of a large and
[574] industrious camp. Everyone seemed to be eating well, and Cephu offered us food, which was unusual for him. He did not part with any meat—he had already heard of our haul at Ekianga's camp and asked why we had brought him none. I told him that Masisi thought it would be a good thing if he joined us and the others, and that he would get plenty of meat then. Cephu said he would think about it, but he was offended that we had brought him nothing.

Masisi pondered over these things for several days, and our evenings became interspersed with brief arguments between him and Mambunia and Kelemoke as to what they should do. Everyone was beginning to be hungry for meat again, and although Ekianga and Manyalibo had promised to send our nets back, they never did. We did not have enough people in our own camp to make a successful hunt. In the end Masisi made up his mind to steal a march on the others and get to Apa Kadiketu before they did. By this time we had been joined by a number of bachelors from both the other camps, and also by a third group of distant in-laws of Masisi, all of whom had learned that we were getting a great deal of honey.

621 On our way to Apa Kadiketu we heard news that brought matters
628 to a head. We met Madyadya coming hotfoot from the direction of the village to warn Ekianga that a group of foreign Pygmies from the other side of the Epulu had invaded our territory and were steal-

ing all our honey to the east. Masisi immediately sent his son with 621
Madyadya to tell Manyalibo to forget the quarrel about the nets and 628
come and join him at once at Apa Kadiketu so that we could all make war on the other Pygmies together. He also sent Kelemoke with the same message to Cephu. We pressed on and built our camp in a hum of excitement.

Kenge saw that I was taking this all very seriously, and he led me to one side. "Old Masisi's head is unsteady," he said. "It has worms in it. He will fight only with words. Every year those Pygmies come into our land and we go into theirs. There is plenty of food; so long as we do not meet there is no fighting. If we do meet, then those who are not in their own land run away and leave behind whatever they have stolen. That is the only way we ever fight—we are not villagers."

But it was a wonderful fight of words, particularly when Ekianga 621
and the others joined us. There was so much disagreement that 578
Masisi said he was not ready to live in the same camp with them
yet, and he removed himself to another camp about half a mile away.
Cephu, still not sure which way the wind was blowing, camped be-
tween the two, and to one side, making a perfect triangle. For a
whole week messengers were being sent back and forth. Eventually [628]
the invaders, presumably having had their fill of honey, retreated across the Epulu, declaring that never again would they enter such inhospitable territory.

But everyone was far too busy scouring the countryside and mark- 621
ing out new honey trees to be seriously bothered. It was strange to [222]
see how this familiar old camp took new shape. Any vestiges of old 621
huts were cleared away, except for the remains of the one where I 122
had lived, and that of Ekianga, both of which were made better and bigger. I did not take my old hut but moved to the far end, where Cephu had been, near to Moke. Ekianga and all his three wives, now on good terms with one another, were to the other side of me.

621 of me. Masisi, still breathing fire and fury about the treachery of his relatives, came to visit us from time to time; otherwise he kept strictly to his own camp.

221 And so, after the Pygmies had taken advantage of the one season
621 they know, a season which allows them to forget about the cares of communal hunting and the need for constant co-operation, the camp was beginning to come together again. Every year this splitting up takes place, and every year the forest draws its people back together. Whatever frictions had existed were soon healed; a new year was about to begin. Before this camp ended, Masisi would have found some excuse to move a little farther north. Ekianga was already talking of shifting a few hundred yards south, and Cephu would make up his mind to jump this way or that. Everyone knew it, and within a week of arriving at Apa Kadiketu they were talking about where they would build their next camp, and how it would be one camp again—until the next honey season.

114 But I would never know that next camp, so I made the most of my last home in the forest, sharing it as always with a good and constant friend. Maliamo set up house in Masisi's camp, and sometimes Kenge stayed there, sometimes in the main camp. At all times the forest was full of the song and dance of life. The games special to
221 the honey season filled the daylight hours and at dusk there was the
524 dance of the honeybees. Tremendous vine swings were slung from
526 the highest branches, and on these the youths practiced their acrobatics, leaping and somersaulting in the air. When a vine broke it was used for interminable games of tug of war, men against women. But there was a conspicuous lack of gallantry in this particular game, for if either side saw that it was losing ground it sent a saboteur into the other ranks. It is difficult to concentrate on pulling at a line
221 when someone is flirting with you—as Pygmies do. But best of all
535 was the dance. Once again the men and the women divided, and

while the men pretended to be honey gatherers, dancing in a long 221
curling line through the camp, looking up with exaggerated gestures 535
as if searching for some sign of bees, the women danced in another
long line through the trees at the edge of the camp, pretending they
were the bees. The two lines gradually came closer and closer together,
the women singing in a soft, rhythmic buzz, buzz, buzz,
while the men pretended to hear but still not to see them. Then the
women seized burning logs of wood and attacked the men, tapping
the logs on their heads so that a shower of sparks fell over them,
stinging them like the sting of the honeybee. At that they all gathered [372]
up the embers, and where some of the younger men had been building
an elaborate hearth of special woods and special leaves, moistened
to just the right extent, they lit the great honey fire. There was
no flame, but dense clouds of smoke billowed upward. Men blew [534]
on their honey whistles, women clapped their hands, and everyone
burst into the song of magic that would travel with the smoke and
call the bees to come and make more honey.

On such occasions I found that Masisi and Cephu made their appearance 621
more and more often, paving the way for a reunion at the
next camp. When the time came for me to leave all animosities had
been forgotten.

One day Kenge had gone off on some unknown mission and I 114
decided to make a final pilgrimage to Apa Lelo, where the cycle had
begun. This day of all days I wanted to be by myself, but there is
something about the forest, not exactly threatening, but challenging,
that dares you to travel alone. I had to refuse several Pygmies who
wanted to come with me, and once I was well away I was glad. I
knew what the challenge was, for to be alone was as though you were
daring to look on the face of the great God of the Forest himself, so
overpowering was the goodness and beauty of the world all around.
Every trembling leaf, every weathered stone, every cry of an animal

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648 Before the Belgians stopped intervillage and intertribal warfare, the most important single duty of the pygmy was to act as scout and intelligence agent in the forest. As soon as he became aware of a raiding party crossing the boundary of his host's territory he would hotfoot it to the village to give warning. This eternal vigilance on the part of the pygmy was probably of more value to his hosts than the meat that he brought in. Now that the need of this has ceased he is fulfilling only half of his contract; the Negro, who still provides plantains and manufactured objects, is still fulfilling all of his. Still both are satisfied.

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648 Ordinarily, the pygmy keeps inside the territory of his Negro hosts. Individuals and small family groups may go outside to visit relatives in other bands, but this causes no disturbance because the visitors turn in their game to the hosts of the kinsmen whom they are visiting. This constant milling about evens up on the whole, and the number of pygmies in any band at any one time is about the same. There are occasions, however, when the hunters of a band may have a strong reason to pass beyond the landmarks which designate their hosts' territorial boundaries. If there is a lot of game just over the border and no pygmies there to catch it, the pygmies will tell their Negroes, who tell the Negroes owning that part of the forest. An agreement will be made between the two groups of Negroes, and the pygmies will be allowed to take the game, provided that they pay a part of it to the owners of the forest, and another part to their own hosts. This kind of economic treaty, therefore, brings the pygmies of a given band into contact with two groups of Negroes, and may initiate new relationships.

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574 When the pygmy camp is close to the Negro village, some of the pygmies

[P. 323-B]

P 224 433 Although between themselves the pygmies have little division of labor, in another sense they are all specialists in hunting, and the division of labor is between them and the Negroes. In this sense the pygmies form an ethnic caste, a genetically and occupationally segregated segment of a larger economic entity.

P Z 224 433 [481] This does not mean that the Negro does no hunting. However, the pygmy spends all of his time hunting, the Negro only a portion of his. The pygmy depends largely on his ability to move noiselessly and swiftly about the forest, and to climb trees. The Negro depends on his greater patience and mechanical ingenuity, for he hunts largely by means of elaborate traps, deadfalls, pits, weighted spears dangled over elephant paths, and other deadly devices. The pygmy could never be induced to dig a pit; it is too much work, takes too long, and takes too much concentration and persistence. Nor do they ever use traps.

P 224 [101] Throughout the pygmy country, the pygmies can be classified either as net hunters or non-net hunters, depending on whether they habitually practice big community hunts, driving animals into nets, or depend entirely on individual stalking as a means of securing game. They may also be classified by whether or not they use bows and arrows. In both net hunting and the use of the bow and arrow, the pygmies follow the lead of the Negroes among whom they live. Where the Negroes have nets, the pygmies have nets; where the Negroes have bows, the pygmies have bows. This is easily understood, since the Negroes make both the nets and the arrowheads. Presumably, the bowless pygmies are net hunters, for otherwise they could not live.

P [621] Whether the pygmies in a group are net hunters or bowmen or both makes a considerable difference in the rest of

[P. 328-A]

224 621 their activities and in their social organization in particular, since the degree to which cooperation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band.

224 **Net hunting.**—The technique of net hunting can best be described by going through the chronological events of a single day. The details of where and how to hunt are decided during the usual evening conversation period the night before. The chief argument lies in the weather; if it is going to be dry it will be better for net hunting. Since it will sometimes rain for three days, then go two days without rain, it is a matter of some speculation and prediction whether or not it will rain on a given afternoon. In general the weather permits net hunting, for it usually does not begin to rain until 4:00 P.M., and by that time the pygmies often have enough game to make the day's work profitable. The season is also important, for during the dry season the fallen leaves crackling underfoot make such a noise that stalking is hard even for a tracker so expert as the pygmy. However, this condition is good for net hunting, since it is necessary that the game hear the hunters.

224 283 286 [482] [854] The men, women, and children start out early in the morning, and the women carry their babies on their backs. The men carry the nets. These are made of cordage, about the same width as tennis nets, but a little longer. Since the length of the net is functional in the hunting, the pygmies keep it fairly constant. As one end rots away they add onto the other end, until an old net may eventually be largely replaced by these additions. [197] [439] However, the pygmies prefer new nets made by the Negroes and, furthermore, there are rarely enough nets to go around. Hence they frequently beg their hosts for more.

[P. 328-B]

594 family; that is, a man, his wife, and their children, if any. This group will occupy one hut together, and its personnel is normally fairly stable.

596 614 602 Each biological family belongs to a larger family group or extended family. All the families within a family group are closely related to each other through the male line. That is, each family group will consist of one or more closely related old men, and his or their male descendants and their [561] families. It is these old men, from all the family groups in a camp, who together form the "ruling" age grade.

621 614 Ideally, a pygmy camp consists of a number of these family groups descended through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named. Therefore, the basic pygmy camp is thus a classic gens, or, in looser terminology, a patrilineal clan.

582 594 596 614 621 The families and family groups are strictly exogamic, and the clan is also exogamic if all members live in the same camp. If, however, it is scattered, the exogamy is not too strictly enforced, although a pygmy will never marry anyone to whom he knows himself to be related, on either side.

614 621 **The pygmy camp.**—Although this is the formal, ideal situation, the composition of the camp is complicated by the presence of visitors from other camps who belong to different clans and can be married. So it can be seen that the clan and the camp are not, in practice, synonymous.

621 Pygmy camps are not all the same size; there is a minimum and a maximum number of people who can live together as a cohabitive group, owing to their needs of hunting, and so forth. Fifty huts is about the limit, with from twenty to forty the optimum, and [592] twenty-five the average. Each hut contains one man, his wife, or wives, [162] and a few children, so that one hundred and fifty might be an average number

[P. 335-A]

• 621 592 162 of pygmies, of both sexes and all ages, to a camp, with from twenty to forty active adult males.

621 361 **Moving camp.**—The pygmies live in any given camp for a month or two at a time. By that time they will have frightened most of the game out of the immediate neighborhood, so that they have to walk a long way to hunt and a long way back. Furthermore, since [514] they relieve themselves at only a short distance from their huts, the whole camp will have become extremely malodorous by that time and uncomfortable even by pygmy standards, and a shift is doubly necessary.

484 361 When they have decided where to move, the women pack their carrying baskets with their pots and axes, and a small supply of ficus bark for the men to beat into cloth at their leisure. [482] Whatever they own they will pile on their backs, along with their babies, the babies often mounting the rest of the load. The men will take only their weapons—their bows and arrows and elephant spears.

Once the women are loaded they will start out, and reach the new area at about noon. They begin wandering about looking for a good spot—a place near water where there is supposed to be game, and fruit. Game is the first consideration, then fruit, but a *sine qua non* is to be about fifty yards from drinking water. The next consideration is to have the camp on a moderate slope so it will not become a quagmire when it rains. Another consideration is the absence of dead branches or leaning trunks which might be blown down during the wind storm which precedes the afternoon rain.

361 621 When they have hit upon a suitable spot, the women build the huts in a circle with the doorways facing in. There is no orientation, nor are any spots preferred. There are no special huts for unmarried boys or girls, or

[p. 335-B]

361 widows; there are no ritual structures.
• 621 There is simply one hut for each individual family.
361 The relation of huts in the circle seems fortuitous,
621 but it is dictated more than anything else by the
572 friendship of women. Women are home most of the day; the men are out hunting. Women perform tasks that require no interaction, but they help each other for company. Friendship among the women generally takes the form of pairs, although subsidiary friendships may make larger groups. Hence the position of the huts, or rather the determination of who lives in which hut in what part of the circle, is determined purely on the intimacy of women in their daily work routines.

621 Once they are in this camp they will
361 stay on another three months or so until the game is scarce, the fruit gone, the camp ringed by high refuse heaps and pungent with the smell of rotting food and human refuse. Or they will perhaps move on a little earlier if someone dies and is buried there. They do
[805] not count time; they simply respond to the practical needs of the moment, the way lower organisms respond automatically to changes in intensity of light. Moreover, they will never go back to exactly the same place. One reason for this may be the presence of funeral remains; but there may be other reasons. The pygmies do not say why, and probably do not know.

628 **Intercamp visits.**—For various
574 reasons, individual pygmies and even whole families often visit neighboring
[583] camps. With exchange marriage it is necessary to know the people with whom an exchange is to be made. Thus, the need of finding wives makes it necessary to establish relationships between members of different camp units. Aside from marriage, other circumstances sometimes inspire these visits, as, for example, when an individual

[P. 336-A]